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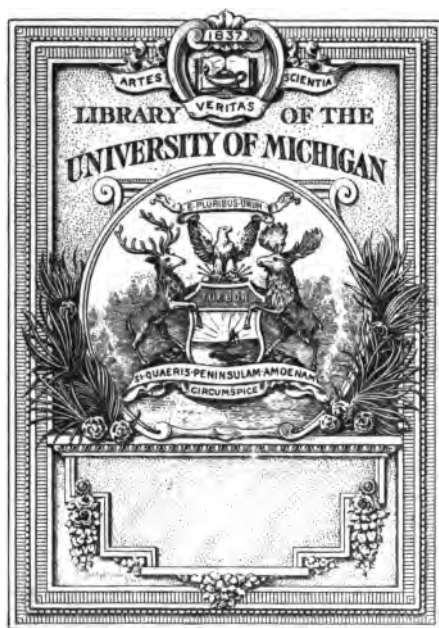
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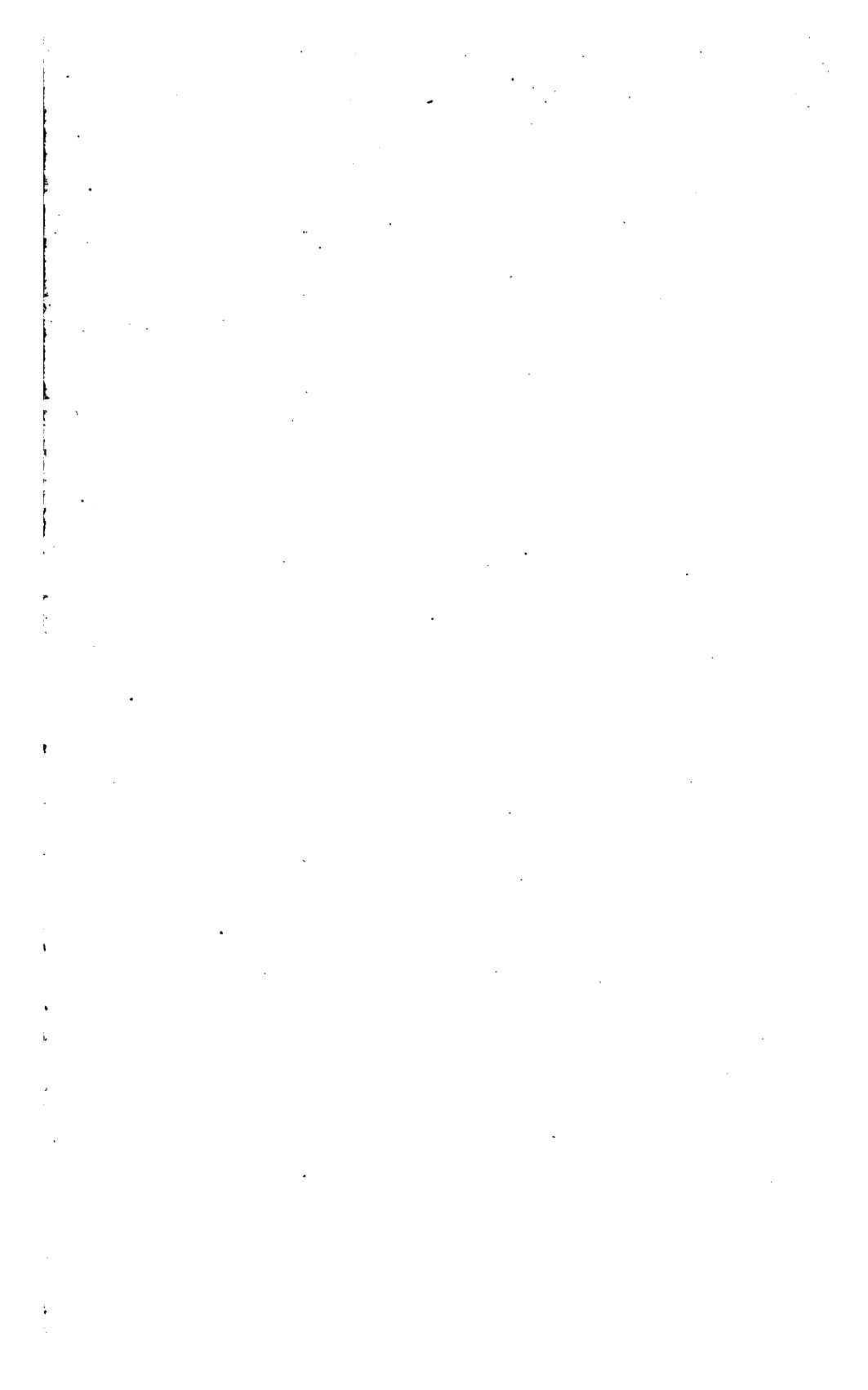
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FILIGREE ORNAMENTS AT THE FLORENCE EXHIBITION.

WE terminate our series of notices of the Florence Exhibition, which closes, we believe, to-day, by the reproduction of a drawing by M. Mariani, representing a number of filigree ornaments generally worn by and peculiar to the women of Italy, who usually possess some such articles of jewellery of more or less value, either received or handed down as heirlooms religiously respected. This kind of jewellery is of remote origin, and is called by the Italians *filigrane* (from the Latin *filum*, thread, and *granum*, grain), of which our English word filigree is evidently only a corruption. Most filigree articles are open, and in the guise of network, consisting of gilt or silvered wire worked tastefully over a form usually in tin. They are much worn by the Italian women, who are passionately fond of jewellery of every description, and do not seem to participate in the sentiment that "beauty unadorned's adorned the most," which their fine classic forms and features would certainly justify them in adopting.



FILIGREE ORNAMENTS AT THE FLORENCE EXHIBITION.—FROM
A DRAWING BY M. MARIANI.

The large brooch in our Illustration is formed of three pieces, united by hinges; the uppermost is fastened on the breast, and the remainder reaches down to the waist, as shown in the black costume of the peasant woman of Arezzo figured in our Engraving of the Types of Tuscan Women in the present Number (see page 547). This brooch is of brass or other metal, covered with a coating of silver; the ornaments are imitations of precious stones. Eardrops of the form exhibited at Florence are very popular, particularly in the south of Italy, mostly with one silvered plate and stones; but not unfrequently the same model has three plates, with large imitation stones of the three colours symbolising Faith, Hope, and Charity. The elegant headdress, in silver and silver-gilt filigree, which forms the chief subject of our Illustration, was sent to Florence by Signor Beretta Giacomo. It constitutes the most striking, as well as the most graceful, portion of the costume of the well-to-do peasants in the environs of Vercelli, one of the most prosperous districts of the ex-kingdom of Piedmont.

THE HISTORY OF TUSCANY,

FROM THE EARLIEST ERA ; COMPRISING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

44/85-4

REVIVAL OF LETTERS, SCIENCES, AND ARTS,

INTERSPERSED WITH ESSAYS ON IMPORTANT LITERARY AND

HISTORICAL SUBJECTS ; INCLUDING

MEMOIRS OF THE FAMILY OF THE MEDICI.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

LORENZO PIGNOTTI, ROYAL AND GRAND DUCAL HISTORIOGRAPHER, ETC.

BY JOHN BROWNING, ESQ.

DEPUTY PURVEYOR OF THE FORCES ; SEVERAL YEARS RESIDENT
IN FLORENCE.

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HISTORY OF TUSCANY.

CHAPTER I.

ADVENTURES OF UGUCCIONE DELLA FAGGIOLA.—DISPUTES BETWEEN SIENNA AND MASSA.—ENTERPRISES OF CASTRUCCIO.—HIS TRIUMPHAL POMP.—CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIM.—HIS FRESH ENTERPRISES AGAINST THE FLORENTINES.—DUKE OF ATHENS.—SECOND CONSPIRACY AGAINST CASTRUCCIO.—DESCENT IN ITALY OF LEWIS THE BAVARIAN.—CREATES CASTRUCCIO DUKE OF LUCCA, WHO ACCOMPANIES HIM TO ROME, WHERE HE CAUSES HIM TO BE CROWNED EMPEROR.—CASTRUCCIO IS APPOINTED VICEBOY AND SENATOR OF ROME.—THE BAVARIAN DEPOSES POPE JOHN XXII., AND CAUSES NICOLAS V. TO BE ELECTED.—CASTRUCCIO LOSES PISTOIA.—RETURNS FROM ROME, SURROUNDS PISTOIA, AND BECOMES AGAIN MASTER OF IT.—HIS DEATH.

THE disgrace of Uguccione gave exceeding joy to the Florentines, who foresaw not how far more terrible
1316. an enemy they would find in Castruccio. The King of Naples sent them Count Guido, of Battifolle, as a new viceroy. The fear that the active Uguccione might still possess partisans in the city determined those who governed, perhaps too in order to remove the odium which the cruel executions had excited, to call Lando d' Agubbio to Florence, and give him the supreme authority over the lives of the citizens. This cruel iniqui-

sitor acted by impulse of those who governed ; but, as he could also act from his own authority, he scattered terror throughout Florence. Upon a simple declaration, and without even the form of a process, he caused the citizens to be put to death at his option ; nor did the viceroy of the King of Naples dare to oppose him by force, as the king had sworn not to change the government. One of the great defects of this republic, as well as of many of those times, is the want of a wise and regular method in criminal trials, which, while securing the lives and liberties of the citizens, is armed with a sufficient power to carry sentences into execution. This assassin, whose government was a disgrace to the dignity of the Florentine republic, was only deposed with difficulty, and upon the interference of the King of Naples. He left, however, a lasting remembrance of his infamous character in the base money he scattered through the city, and which he had the audacity to order to be coined*.

Peace was concluded by the Pisans and Lucchese with the Tuscan cities of the Guelph party ; whilst Uguccione, who had taken refuge in Verona, in the house of Cane della Scala, and was protected by the people of Cane and by Spinetta Malespina, continued to make vain attempts to return to Pisa. These fruitless endeavours cost some Pisan citizens of the family of Lanfranchi their lives, who were supposed to have correspondence with him ; and Spinetta suffered the loss of his estates, which were occupied by Castruccio. This man, also, went seeking refuge in the same generous asylum of talents and valour in misfortune. It was at this time, probably, that Uguccione made the friendship of Dante. Illustrious warriors have almost always honoured letters.

* Vill. lib. 9. cap. 74. 77.

The lofty character of Uguccone appeared made for the Florentine poet; and misfortunes always connect together the unfortunate. Uguccone carried on the war under the standards of the Lord of the Scala, particularly in the war waged with the Paduans; and died at an advanced age a few months before Dante. The Lords of the Scala were not enemies of the Pisans; but the commiseration alone which a great man excites in misfortunes induced them to support Uguccone. They were Ghibellines like the other Lombards, enemies of the Guelphs, and consequently of the Florentines.

Whilst peace reigned in Tuscany, a momentary commotion threatened at once the tranquillity and government of the Siennese republic. A dispute had arisen between Sienna and Massa upon the possession of the Castle of Girfalio, which was occupied by the latter. After useless remonstrances, the Siennese sent a number of armed people, who began to lay waste the country; when the people of Massa, repenting, ceded the castle in dispute, and the armed force was recalled to Sienna. The latter, however, who expected to sack Massa, returned discontented, and, with arms in hand, commenced a tumult, by shouting "death to the captain!" The principals succeeded in appeasing the tumult; but those who were discontented with the government endeavoured to profit by it.

We have already mentioned that the nobles, the doctors, and notaries, were excluded from, and only a few merchants of the middling class were admitted into, the government. The doctors and the notaries embraced this opportunity, when they thought the nine were intimidated, to make a demand of being admitted; which was rejected with disdain, and even accompanied with threats. They then united themselves with the other

discontented, and resolved upon putting the nine to death, creating captain Sozzo Tolomei, and Antonio di Messer Ricovero mayor, and continued to distribute the offices; and rising on the evening of the 26th of October, they hastened towards the palace to put the magistrate to death, shouting aloud that they desired a share in the government. Fortunately, three hundred infantry and many horse had been taken into pay to aid King Robert, as well as one hundred horse and eight hundred ^{1318.} foot, Florentines, commanded by Rucellai. With this small body of troops the government opposed the rebels, who, after two hours' resistance, were defeated, and night afforded them a convenient obscurity either for flight or concealment*. The Florentines, in the mean time, who were gaining greater strength in the Guelph faction, which prevailed in Tuscany, had time to take breath.

Lombardy was for the greater part Ghibelline, but divided into small signiories and republics, ill-fitted to continue united in a confederacy; hence they could not long resist the Florentines, who were powerful both in arms, and in money, and were supported by the pope and the King of Naples. But there was one man possessed of warlike talents sufficient to counterbalance these disadvantages; this was Castruccio. The Florentines who were tranquil in Tuscany, had rather incautiously sent a body of troops of the Tuscan league into Lombardy, being instigated by the pope and King Robert to assist their falling party. Mathew Visconti, head of the Ghibellines in Lombardy, excited Castruccio against them with arms and money. Much was not necessary to

* Cron. Sanc. Rer. Ital. tom. 15. Malev. Istor. Sanes. p. 2. lib. 5. Ammir. Ist. lib. 5.

1319. move this man* who was ready for hostility; either that he foresaw that the Florentines would not long delay attacking Lucca and Pisa, which were of a party hostile to them, that he thought the unstable favour of the citizens, which had elevated him up to the principality of Lucca, could only be preserved by great exploits, adapted to impress them with reverence and terror; or that, conscious of his own military talents, he was probably impatient to display them against the enemies of his country. Being provided therefore with arms and money by the people of Lombardy, and particularly by the Visconti; he collected a body of veterans more formidable for their valour than their number; entered the territory of the Florentines, sacked it, and laid siege to St. Mary on the mountain, (Santa Maria a Monte), and shortly made himself master of it. At this unlooked-for attack the unprepared Florentines, who trusted to the peace, could afford no opposition; and Castruccio returned peaceably to Lucca, laden with booty. This commencement of hostilities in Tuscany, was a prelude to the wars of Lombardy, of which the city of Genoa furnished the greatest incentive, in expelling the Ghibellines, and giving the government to King Robert. Against her, therefore, the most considerable part of the force of the Lombard Ghibellines were directed, which assailed her by land, whilst the Sicilian fleet attacked her

1320. by sea. Castruccio marched with a large body of Lucchese and Pisans, to take a share in the glory of the capture, which he considered certain. The Florentines, taking advantage of his absence, made an inroad upon the Lucchese territory, when Castruccio, with all possible expedition, turned his troops back, and

* Gio. Vill. lib. 9. c. 105.

came up with the enemy near Fucecchio. The two armies, divided only by the Gusciana, consumed considerable time without any advantage, and retired without coming to any action of consequence. The enterprise was not glorious for the Florentines, but was useful to their confederates, the Genoese. Genoa which, by the arrival of this enemy, would have fallen, not only maintained herself, but obliged them to retreat. In the fol-

lowing year, the Florentines, still dreading the ac-
 1321. tive Castruccio, made a league with the Marquis Spinetta Malaspina, and gave him assistance, in order that, by harassing Castruccio, he might prevent him trespassing upon their territory. But Castruccio assembling his troops, and paying little regard to what injury the marquis could do him, marched to meet the Florentines, who were encamped upon the Lucchese territory. Either that the genius of Castruccio impressed the Florentines with terror, or that they little thought he was provided with so many troops, they became panic-struck to such a degree, that, taking advantage of the night, they made a precipitate retreat, and left Castruccio master of the country, who laid it waste wherever he pleased.

Florence had now for several years been more under the protection than dominion of the king of Naples. This appears to have occurred whenever either external dangers or internal dissensions threatened the republic; although she was not free from external fears, as long as one of her most powerful enemies remained in arms: Castruccio nevertheless, and the party that had been raised by Simone della Tosa in the preceding years, as well as the desire of novelty, obliged the Florentines to resume their accustomed form of ancient government; and the period of the government which had been conceded to

King Robert, being expired, it was not renewed*. Shortly before, however, the public, who were not content with their accustomed governors, as happens when affairs do not go on prosperously, had added to the office of priors, twelve good men or *buonumomini*, two for every sixth, who were to remain in office six months. It was their apparent commission to be counsellors of the priors, but the latter could do nothing without their authority†.

1322. In the mean time Castruccio, who was master of the country, scoured the castles and cities subject to, or allied with, the Florentines with impunity. Pistoia, situated almost at an equal distance between Florence and Lucca, the possession of which therefore was as necessary to one as to the other, was governed under the influence of the Florentines; but Castruccio harassed the country so greatly with arms, and teased the city with snares and stratagems, that she was obliged, as a lesser evil, to become tributary to him. He remained contented for the present with this pretention, waiting only for a better opportunity to make himself master of it. The Florentines, who were disunited amongst themselves from the spirit of faction, instead of devoting all their attention to resist this active enemy, sent succours against the sons of Matthew Visconti, who, with various fortune, maintained their party in Lombardy. Castruccio, however was making continual progress; since, impeded neither by garrisons, the reinforcements of the Florentines, nor by the rigours of winter, he made himself master of a great part of the mountain of Pistoia; he then turned his attention to the country of Fucecchio, Santa Croce, Castel Franco, and passing the Arno above

* Vill. lib. 9. cap. 186. † Gio. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 214.

Montopoli, caused infinite damage ; whilst a republic, so powerful in money and troops, dared not to send any force against him ; which gave so much courage to the enemy, that he ventured even to approach Prato with no more than six hundred horse and 4,000 infantry, and threatened to occupy it. At this last insult, the Florentines, roused by shame, vied with each other in taking

1393.

to arms, and pardoned those who had been exiled on account of factions, and who had carried arms under the banners of the republic. Of these not less than 4,000 shortly joined them. An army of 1,500 horse and 20,000 infantry marched towards Prato. The contest would have been too unequal: nevertheless Castuccio for a time intrepidly confronted so large an army ; but when he perceived the Florentines hastening to attack him, he retired quietly in the night to Serravalle. It would appear that so numerous a body of troops ought to have followed him up, and have laid siege even to Lucca ; but the nobles and the people, being at variance with each other, they remained in this uncertainty some days, and afterwards retired almost in disorder to Florence. The outlaws, who according to agreement, were to be taken back, had gone before them ; but coming forward with unfolded banners, and in so great a number, the people began to look upon them as enemies, and would not receive them : they were obliged indeed to retire, but adding this fresh inquiry to the old ones, they meditated upon the means of entering by force. Knowing how discontented the nobility were, who were excluded from the government, they entered into a secret treaty with them. Amerigo Donati, in no respect a degenerate son of his father Corso, was at the head of this conspiracy : on the night of St. Lawrence, the outlaws were to approach Florence, be admitted into it, scour

the city, armed with their friends, and change the government. The conspiracy, however, was discovered the day before the execution; the people took to arms, and hastened upon the walls with a great number of lights, which the outlaws seeing, perceived their intentions were discovered, and retired. The government in prosecuting the guilty, prudently listened to the counsels of clemency*.

Castruccio, who aspired to the dominion over all Tuscany, now wished to make himself master of Pisa, and held a secret communication with a certain Lanfranchi to put Count Mieri Gherardesca to death, who was either the master of it, or directed its government: the conspiracy, however, was also discovered, but was attended with no other consequence than the death of Lanfranchi, and the outlawry of Castruccio, as an enemy of Pisa, with a price set upon his head†; an event which gave great joy to Florence, who thus saw a powerful city separated from her greatest enemy. Castruccio, however, still undismayed, attempted a blow which, if it had succeeded, would have greatly annoyed the Florentines. Fucecchio was a place of great importance, very populous, and defended by a good garrison. Having received expectations that he would be admitted into it, he approached at night with only one hundred and fifty horse, and five hundred infantry. He was in fact let in, but the garrison and the people of the place, taking up arms, began to fight against him: the people still would have been overpowered, if at dawn of day they had not given signs of determined opposition, by demanding aid from the garrisons of the neighbouring places San Miniato, Castelfranco and Sante Croce. These troops, by hastening their march, arrived in the midst of the

* Gio. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 214. c. 219. † Gio. Vill. lib. 9. c. 230.

fight: Castruccio nevertheless continued the contest for a long time with the greatest valour; but seeing it impossible to oppose the numerous troops that had arrived, and who now assailed him on the flanks, together with the people of the place, who annoyed him from the streets and windows with every sort of missile weapon, after having given every proof of the most skilful and courageous general, and being himself wounded in the face, he retired by cutting his way through the enemy. It is related of him, that being always among the last to retreat in battles, and finding himself surrounded by the enemy who were following up his troops without the castle, perceiving that he was not known, he feigned himself to be one of the former; and coming up in the midst of these with his own men, who were in anxious search of their leader, they discovered him, turned face, and followed up the enemy with ardour as far as the gates*. This man carried on war against the Florentines both by arms and secret correspondence, by which he endeavoured to make himself master of

^{1324.} Prato, Pisa, and even of Florence. His correspondence, however, was discovered, which he held particularly with Thomas Frescobaldi, who endeavoured

to corrupt the French soldiery by means of a friar,
^{1325.} their confessor†. Frescobaldi fled; was declared a traitor to his country, and the friar condemned to perpetual prison.

Pistoia, courted both by Castruccio and the Florentines, had undergone various vicissitudes. A Pistoiese ecclesiastic, Ormanno Tedici, abbot of Pacciana, inflamed with that ambition, so ill adapted to his condition in life, and of mean talents, thought he could

* Vill. lib. 9. cap. 233. Tigrini Vita Cast. † Vill. lib. 9. c. 293.

take advantages of circumstances, and make himself master of Pistoia. Having gained the lower classes of people by his riches, and showing himself zealous for peace, he secured the city supported by his partisans, took the palace, and strong places, remained Lord of Pistoia, drove out the friends of the Florentines, and made a truce with Castruccio. The abbot, however, had not talents to maintain that post, which was rather filled by his nephew Philip, who was more active, and possessed a superior mind. Moreover, either that the latter found himself frequently molested, by the imbecilities and caprices of his uncle in the administration, or chose to be a free Lord, he conspired against him with the consent and aid of Castruccio, and drove him from the state. He remained master of it for about two years; but he soon perceived, that, being in a city which was divided by parties, with the enmity of his uncle, between the Florentines and Castruccio, who contended for the dominion, he would be unable to preserve it. Desirous of giving the city over to Castruccio, it became necessary to deceive the Florentines, who possessed vigilant citizens in Pistoia, partisans, and soldiers; Tedici, in order to lull them to sleep whilst he was treating secretly with Castruccio, set a treaty on the tapis with the former to give them Pistoia; they were taken in the net, and when they thought they were to occupy the place, were unexpectedly informed Castruccio had entered, and assumed the dominion. The heads of the Florentine government, together with Urlimbracca, a German conductor, were at a banquet in San Piero Scheraggio, when they received the news of the first tumult in Pistoia. Rising hastily from table, and getting on horseback, they hastened only to a tardy succour, since they found a part of their soldiers on the road, together with the citizens, and partisans who had saved

themselves by flight: 6,000 florins in gold seasonably spent by Castruccio gained the mediators; the greater part was received by Cremona, who deceived the Florentines; and the father Gregory, who secretly conducted the conspiracy between Philip and Castruccio, was, in recompense, created Abbot of San Frediano in Lucca. Philip Tedici became a captain of Castruccio, and married his daughter, not without suspicion, however, of having got rid of his wife by poison*.

The hatred the city of Florence bore to Castruccio, and the dread she had of him had increased to a degree that the Florentines unanimously determined upon the most vigorous war, as the only means of freeing themselves entirely from so great an enemy. Raimond of Cardona arrived in Florence, who enjoyed the reputation of an excellent warrior, and was created by the Florentines captain-general in this war. He soon gave the best hopes of speedy success, by taking the Castle of Artimino which belonged to the Pistoiese. The greatest preparations were now made: the army comprised 15,000 infantry of choice troops from the city of Florence and the neighbourhood, who were rendered more courageous and faithful by their hatred of Castruccio, and by their attachment to their property and families. The cavalry were in number 2,500, great part taken in pay from different nations†. This army was afterwards increased by the confederate cities. The pope, who united with them, sent no other succour than that of his excom-

* Istor. Pistol.

† Villani, lib. 9. cap. 301. says, "The army never in the community of Florence was greater without assistance of friendship. . . . and the Florentines had in their army full eight hundred and more tents, and pavilions, and camps of linen; and there was not a day that not 3,000 florins in gold and more were not counted out to the army.

munications which he fulminated against Castruccio, and the war was successfully begun by the Florentines. The army marched towards Pistoia. Castruccio, who had not force to keep the field, shut himself up and defended it. The captain of the Florentines laid waste the country, and amongst other insults ordered even a race to be run under the walls, endeavouring to draw him to battle: when he perceived that all was in vain, he made a false attack upon the Castle of Tizzana, and suddenly advancing towards the Gusciana, he occupied an important post, viz., Cappiano; from whence he could injure the Lucchese territory. The danger of Lucca drew Castruccio from Pistoia, who, hastening to the Valdinievole, using all his skill in the art of war, endeavoured to secure the Lucchese country in the best manner possible, by a ditch that he caused to be hastily fortified and defended. Altopascio was in the hands of the Lucchese, a very strong castle, well garrisoned, and esteemed of considerable importance from its distance of only eight miles from Lucca: this was besieged with all vigour by the Florentines. Castruccio endeavoured in vain, by various diversions, even upon the territory of Florence, to call the army away from it: the castle was finally obliged to surrender. This important advantage gave them so much courage, that they considered themselves in a situation to conquer Lucca, and entirely ruin Castruccio: breaking up, therefore, from Altopascio, the captain of the Florentines entered with his troops into the marshes of Sesto. But Castruccio, although inferior in number, was more skilful in campaigning, caused the necessary positions to be taken up, which Raimondo had omitted to occupy, either from negligence or ignorance, and fortified the hills of Vivinaia, Monte Chiaro, Cerugli, and Porcari, in a manner, that the

road was shut upon the Florentine army from going to Lucca; and finally obliged him to raise his camp. In endeavouring to retire to a more advantageous position, a sharp skirmish commenced between two parties of soldiers, which lasted many hours. The reinforcements were increased on both sides, and both were frequently repulsed; but finally the Florentines gave way, and some of their first generals were taken prisoners, among the rest, the German Urlimbracca, Francis Brunelleschi, and John Tosa, (Giovanni della Tosa). Castruccio displayed his accustomed energy and intrepidity, and although he was wounded, to his presence in all probability the victory may be ascribed. This action, greatly as it inspired the Lucchese with new courage, disheartened the Florentines, who, however they were superior in number, were obliged to retreat at every rencontre. Castruccio, seeing his troops not sufficiently numerous to cope with the enemies' army, sent in the greatest haste for succour to Visconti; but whilst the latter were delaying their arrival, he feared that the Florentines, over whom he held the victory, would retreat panic-struck; and therefore endeavoured to detain Raimond, feeding him with the hope of feigned treaties, and surrender of castles. Azzo Visconti finally arrived at Lucca with no more than eight hundred German horse, who had united with two hundred of Passerino, Lord of Mantua and Modena. The Florentines had retired to Altopascio. Visconti, more greedy of gold than of glory, did not appear to wish to advance, unless the money promised him was paid. Castruccio hastened to him with all possible speed, and satisfied him both in money and promises. Neglecting no means, and knowing how susceptible is a young man at the entreaties of the fair sex, he caused the finest

women of Lucca to send him their earnest solicitations: inflamed him to the fight by shewing him that they were fighting their common enemies; that the Raimond, who commanded the Florentines, had been frequently beaten by his father and uncle*, and not long since had fled from prison; that the name of Visconti was fatal to him; and that it remained only for him to beat him. Castruccio returned to the army, and whilst they were waiting for the reinforcement of Azzo, began a false attack in order to detain the Florentines; which was made with such artifice, that he appeared to wish to avoid battle. The Florentines were always very superior in number to the Lucchese, in spite of the aid of Visconti†. Azzo having finally arrived, the battle was commenced with ardour on both sides. The Florentines, according to custom, had formed three corps: the first, composed of Florentine and French sappers, amounting to not more than a hundred and fifty on horseback, not only sustained the fury of the enemies' first rank, but passed through the midst of it: this, however, was only a slight inroad, since the nerve of the enemies' army was behind the sappers. Azzo, with his troops, soon defeated the second body, which was commanded by Borrio, a nobleman of Raimond, who, after a few blows, shamefully took to flight; and thus the cavalry of the Florentine army was soon routed. The infantry fought

* In 1319 he had been defeated by Galeazzo Visconti, son of Maffeo, in 1322 by Marco Visconti, near Basignara; in the following year he was made prisoner in Modezia or Monza by Galeazzo Visconti.—Istor. di Parma. Rer. Ital. tom. 12.

† In the Pistoiese History, it is said that Castruccio was thrown from his horse by Urimbracca a German conductor, who shortly afterwards was taken, but this appears to have happened in the skirmish described.

with great courage, but met with the same fate. Castruccio, foreseeing the issue of the battle, caused the bridge at Cappiano to be occupied by a body of men, in order to deprive the enemy of his easy retreat. The slaughter and confusion was great. The number of the killed is not mentioned; but both killed and prisoners must have been immense. Among the former is mentioned, the Captain Raimond of Cardona, with his son, and many other illustrious foreigners and citizens of Florence; the triumphant chariot was taken, together with the camp, baggage-waggons, tents, and banners; and this defeat, which happened on the 23d of Sept., may be mentioned amongst the most memorable of the Florentine republic; as we shall perceive from the consequences that followed*. Castruccio, without meeting

with further resistance, left Altopascio besieged, and
 1325. marched to Signe, a very strong castle, which he occupied without resistance: he afterwards advanced upon the Florentine territory, sacking the country, and burning the villas, which have at all periods been very numerous around Florence†. Arriving at Peretola on the 4th of October, he ordered

* Gio. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 305. Istor. Pistor. Ann. Tigri. Vita di Cast.

† Vill. lib. 9. cap. 316. Castruccio pitched his camp at Santa Moro, burning and laying waste the fields and towns, and Quaracchi, with all the villas around; and his people, making inroads even as far as the walls of Florence, remained there for three days, laying waste by fire and robbery, from the Arno, as far as the mountains, and from the foot of Carreggi as far as Rifredi, which was the finest country of villas, the most populous and cultivated; and more nobly laid out for the pleasure of the citizens than any other country in the world. On the 4th of October, in spite of the Florentines, he caused three races to be run from our own posts as far as Peretola, one with horse, the other with foot, and another with harlots; and there was not a man who dared to go out of Florence.

aces to be run in ridicule of the Florentines, from the same posts from which the course of Florence began, whilst the panic-struck Florentines remained constantly shut up within the walls, in spite of the many armed troops they had in the city, and were in perpetual anxiety night and day. Nor did the fury of the conquerors stop here; it extended itself through the greater part of the Florentine territory. A few days afterwards, Altopascio surrendered, with the whole of the garrison, prisoners of war, amounting to five hundred soldiers; Carmignano, the castle of Artimino, and the greater part of the towns of the Florentines, opened their gates to him. If the Bishop Guido of Arezzo, who was an ally of Castruccio, and was so powerful in arms, had fallen with his force upon Florence, as Castruccio requested him to do, the Florentines would have found themselves in a bad plight: but the bishop, in order either not to irritate the pope further, who had already interdicted him; moved by the entreaties of his mother, who was a Florentine of the house of Frescobaldi; or that the rising greatness of Castruccio gave him umbrage, did not move, and thus Florence was saved. The citizens, not thinking themselves secure, began to fortify the walls with all possible celerity. As a greater insult to the Florentine republic, Castruccio caused money to be struck at Signa, with the stamp of the emperor Otho; which pieces of money were called *Castruccini*.

Having caused all the mischief he could to the enemy, Castruccio returned to Lucca, and entered it on the 10th of November in triumphal pomp. It was his wish to imitate the rites of the ancient Romans. On the morning of St. Martin, a day sacred to the Lucchese, the long procession moved from Altopascio.

The prisoners preceded it, with trophies taken from the enemy: then followed the triumphal chariot with the Florentine ensigns, the standards of the republic, those of King Robert turned inside out, and dragged on the ground: next came the captive Florentines, with their heads uncovered and feet bound, whilst those of other nations were only disarmed, and untied. Among the prisoners of distinction, those who most commanded attention, were Urlimbracca, a German, a general of much fame, respectable for his character, lofty stature, and martial air: Pietro Narsi, a Frenchman; and Raimond of Cardona, a Spaniard, with his son, accompanied by a squadron of Bavarians and Spanish horse, prisoners.

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The Florentine general walked dressed in black, with his countenance to the ground: his son dressed in a cloth of silver, rode a small horse. The soldiers of Castuccio were crowned with ivy, and shining with gold and silver. The various spoils and booty that were taken from the enemy were drawn together. At last appeared Castuccio, in an open coach, in the Roman fashion, drawn by four white horses; clothed in purple friezed with gold, and crowned with olive, he stood between two statues, Justice and Peace, with Plenty under his feet. The windows of the city were completely decorated with tapestry, and the streets were strewn with leaves. The triumphal arches were very numerous, and there were various other sights to render the pomp more magnificent. In one place was seen a magnificent

1326.

castle, which, as the triumphal chariot passed by, was contended for by young men, dressed in white, and defended by others in blue; in another there was a tournament, in others a hunt, and the conquerors were saluted in various places with music. The concourse of spectators from the neighbouring country was immense;

since Castruccio issued an order that a safe passport should be given to all, and even to those of the enemy who wished to enjoy the spectacle. He was met at the gate by the clergy, nobility, and the people, dressed in gala, amidst continual shouts of applause.

^{1396.} Florence, in the mean time, as she had been wont to do in misfortunes, and mistrustful of herself, had recourse to the King of Naples, and gave the command to the Duke of Calabria, with some limitations, the principal of which was, that he should not alter the government*. Castruccio at this time was in very serious danger. Amongst his troops were some French companies: in the battle of Altopascio, Peter Narsi, chevalier of the county of Bari in Lorrain, had been taken prisoner. During the time of his captivity, probably, he began a secret correspondence with the heads or officers of the French troops in the service of Castruccio: a correspondence, which, when he was afterwards ransomed and elected captain by the Florentines, he was able with their money to carry on with greater effect. The design had for its object the

^{1396.} life of Castruccio, upon whom the fortune of Lucca appeared to hang. But it was difficult for such a conspiracy to escape the vigilance of that cunning man, who, upon discovering it, caused nine accomplices to be arrested; and although, in those times of licentious military discipline, few ventured to dye their hands in the blood of foreign troops, he courageously ordered them, in the presence of the whole army, to be beheaded†.

Whilst the Florentines were waiting for assistance from Naples, Castruccio continued infesting their towns,

* *Istoria Manoscritta Lucchese.*

† *Gio. Vill. lib. 9. c. 333.*

scouring the places which hitherto had remained unmolested. Seeing the improbability of maintaining himself in Signa, upon the arrival of the Duke of Calabria, he dismantled the fortifications, and destroyed the bridge; and trying every means to injure the enemy, he thought of turning the course of the Arno, by raising a wall at the gonfolina, and making a stoppage, by which means the water increasing behind would overflow Florence. But so little was the art of levelling known in those times, that the masters of hydraulics he consulted endeavoured to convince him of the impossibility of the execution*, by telling him that the declivity of the Arno as far as the gonfolina, which is not greater than twenty-one arms, amounted to a hundred and fifty, whereby the city was spared this fresh danger.

In the mean time, the general of the Florentines, not at all disheartened at the ill success of the conspiracy which had been planned against Castruccio, tried the minds of some of the chief citizens to obtain Carmignano. The latter, panic-struck at the executions made by Castruccio, disclosed the intrigue secretly to them. Piero coming with that vain hope, with not more than two hundred horse and five hundred infantry, all of whom, however, were picked men, found himself surrounded in the snares thrown out for him by Castruccio, and after fighting valiantly, was taken prisoner with many of his men. Castruccio, among other accusations, told him he had failed in the promise he had given him when he was liberated, not to make war against him, and therefore ordered his head to be taken off, in the square of Pistoia †.

The viceroy of the Duke of Calabria, Walter, Duke of

* Giey. Vill. lib. 9. c. 335. † Vill. lib. 9. cap. 346. Istor. Pistol.

^{1326.} Athens, now arrived in Florence, and was followed by the legate of the pope. Either Castruccio feared the force of this confederacy, or, what is more probable, he was in ill health, and unable to put himself at the head of his troops, and wished to gain time, he wrote to the legate a letter full of moderation, in which he declared himself ready to make peace with the Florentines. This frivolous commencement of a treaty soon vanished; either that Castruccio was not sincere, or because the Florentines opposed it, expecting the Duke of Calabria, whose energy and power had greatly swelled their hopes. The duke at last arrived in Sienna, accompanied by many of the principal Neapolitan nobility: at first they were all received with the greatest splendour; but the duke prolonging his stay there to excess, demanded the government of that city and of Florence. The Siennese, jealous of their liberty, became tumultuous: the streets were blocked up, and an attack was about commencing upon the troops of the duke, when the council being assembled, it was agreed upon that the government was to be given him for five years, but that his power should be limited to electing Mayor of

^{1326.} Sienna, one of the three who should be proposed to him by the people, who was not to be called mayor, but viceroy of the duke, and should swear to observe the laws and statutes of Sienna*. He then went to Florence; but whilst he was wasting his precious time in Sienna and Florence, in the vain ceremonies, and the pompous reception offered him by the Florentines, the favourable moment for † oppressing Cas-

* Cronica Sanese. Rer. Ital. tom. 15. Malevol. 156. Sane. pag. 2. lib. 5.

† Vill. lib. 10. cap. 1.

truccio was lost; who, re-established in health, would not listen to any conditions. Great supplies of both arms and money were collected. The duke demanded an increase of authority, which he obtained, although circumscribed within certain limits. The great of the city, who were continually complaining that the government was in the hands of the people, united to give the duke the absolute command over Florence, thinking they would gain by the change. The duke, however, did not venture to engage in so difficult a step, well knowing the love of liberty predominant in the people.

The war against Castruccio was commenced with spiritual arms; his ally, the Bishop of Arezzo, ^{1336.} being publicly excommunicated by the legate upon the square of the Holy Cross (Santa Croce), with all the solemn formalities*; but Castruccio dreaded only temporal power. Although he was so greatly inferior in strength to the Duke and the Florentines, although he was assailed by Malaspina, who was succoured by the legate, and the Lord della Scala on one side, and by the Neapolitans who had disembarked at Genoa on the other; and although two castles upon the mountain of Pistoia had rebelled against him, towards which city a considerable force of the Florentines had advanced; he nevertheless repaired his fortifications on every side: prevented the Neapolitans from entering the Lunigiana, and Malaspina, and the Florentines from giving succour to the rebelled castles, to which he had laid siege; on the contrary, by expeditious and masterly marches, he cut off the retreat of a large body of the latter, commanded by Count Squillace, by Americ Donati, and by Giannozzo Cavalcanti; so that from danger of being taken prisoners,

* Vill. lib. 10. cap. 3.

they were obliged to return to Florence by the Bolognese territory*. The duke and the Florentines endeavoured to conquer that man by stratagem and secret intrigue, whom they could not by arms. The very numerous family

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Quartigiani existed in Lucca: Gueruccio, one of the principal, gained by the duke and the gold of the Florentines, induced all the family, who were powerful in friends and dependants, to a conspiracy, of which the following was the plan. The duke was to hasten with his troops towards Pistoia, and by this movement entice Castruccio to that city. Upon a concerted signal, the troops that the Florentines had at Fucecchio and in Val d'Arno, were to march rapidly upon Lucca, where a gate was to be opened to them by Quartigiani, who, at the same time, running through the city, and exciting the people against Castruccio, were to hoist the standards of the pope and the duke. The Quartigiani were joined in the conspiracy by the family Avogadri, who were not less numerous. Nothing is more fatal to conspiracies than

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delay: the minds of conspirators are at all times in a dangerous suspense. The duke delayed his movements too long, and one of the family, becoming alarmed, revealed the order of the conspiracy to Castruccio. The Quartigiani were immediately arrested; the enemies' banners were found prepared; and a bloody execution took place of the principal accomplices of the family of the Quartigiani. Messer Gueruccio with three of his sons were hanged; and the others prevented, by a cruel operation, from propagating the family. Of the Avogadri, twenty-two were first led through Lucca upon an ass, riding backwards, and were afterwards hanged: the remainder of the accomplices were banished†.

* Vill. lib. 10. cap. 6.

† Giov. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 25. Tigr. Vita Castruc.

Italy continued to be divided into the two factions of Guélf and Ghibelline. The former was looked upon as the predominant, since the pope belonged to it, who besides the temporal was master of the spiritual arms, which, in those times, were very powerful, as well as Robert King of Naples, Lord of Provence, upon whose nod Genoa depended; the opulent Florentine republic, capable of sustaining the burthen of long wars, besides many other smaller cities and petty sovereigns, who adhered to the same league. In Tuscany, the power would have greatly preponderated on the Guelfan side, if one man, Castruccio, by his valour and genius, had not only arrested it, but turned the balance on the other side. In Lombardy the Ghibelline party was prevalent, but the members of it were too numerous to hope for any union from them. The latter, seeing the power of the contrary faction increase, through the influence of the legate of the pope, Cardinal del Poggetto, (who having made himself master of Bologna, of Parma and the Modenese, threatened the Ghibellines of Lombardy,) thought of opposing the secular power to the ecclesiastic, which had been always rivals. The imperial throne had been vacant for a long time; from the death of Henry VII. They offered the crown to Ludovic Duke of Bavaria, inviting him to receive it in Italy, Milan, and in Rome. The duke marched, and was met in Trento by the principal lords of Lombardy; the Visconti of Milan, Cane della Scala, Lord of Verona, Passerino Bonacorsi of Mantua, one of the Marquises of Este, lords of Ferrara, Guido Tarlati, and Bishop of Arezzo, who had been deposed by the pope. Castruccio, not thinking proper to move, sent ambassadors there, as did the Pisans, the outlaws of Genoa, and Frederic of Sicily. From Trento the Bavarian continued his route to Milan, where he was

crowned with the iron crown *, in the usual manner, by the bishops of Arezzo, of Brescia, and of Trento. The government of Milan which was taken away from the Visconti, their arrest, the enormous extortions of money he made from the Milanese, evince his greedy, cruel, and unjust character, which was confirmed also in other parts of Italy. The Duke of Calabria in the mean time, having failed in making himself master of Lucca, and not wishing to lose his credit entirely, thought of attempting some new enterprise. Having therefore assembled his army, he gave the command of it and instructions to Count Beltram, who making a stay in Signa made a feint of threatening Carmignano; but he turned when Castruccio least expected it, upon the Holy Mary of the Mountain (Santa Maria a Monte). Castruccio had not force sufficient to cope in the field with this army: that small place, however, well fortified, defended by a scanty garrison, and by the obstinacy of the people of the place who were very faithful to Castruccio, having refused to surrender, resisted with astonishing courage for so long a time against such a number of people, sustained various repeated assaults, and finally surrendered only upon good conditions †. Castruccio, having taken up a position at Vivinaia, inferior as he was in troops, did not choose to risk every thing for a castle, having certain hope of superiority in the early arrival of the Bavarian, who was already at Pontremoli, where Castruccio went to meet him, paid him homage, and loading him with presents, engaged him to second his designs. But when he was between Lucca and Pisa, the Pisans refused to receive him, although they promised to pay him 60,000 florins in gold. The Pisans were al-

* Vill. lib. 10. cap. 17. 19.

† Vill. lib. 10. cap. 29.

ways friends to the imperial party, and refused him entrance alone, on account of his being accompanied by Castruccio, whom the rulers of the government too much dreaded. The Bavarian, who received advice from Castruccio, did not consent: the Pisan ambassadors at their return were arrested, and before the Pisans could get any knowledge of the issue of the treaty, they found themselves surrounded by the troops of the Bavarian on one side, and by those of Castruccio on the other. The former repaired to the borough of St. Marc, upon the road to Florence, the latter to the road to Lucca; and two bridges were built upon the Arno, one above, the other below, the city, for the easy communication of the two camps. Porto Pisano was occupied at the same time, and the greater part of the Castles of this republic. The Bishop of Arezzo, who had been the mediator of the treaty; who had already entertained hopes of becoming master of Pisa; and who thus saw the city fall into the hands of the Bavarian, and probably of Castruccio, of whom he was the secret rival, declaimed greatly against the violation of the public faith and the rights of nations which had taken place in the persons of the ambassadors. An indecent altercation occurred between him and Castruccio, in the presence of the Bavarian*, who, appearing rather to favour Castruccio, the bishop departed very angry; and when he afterwards learnt that Pisa had opened her gates to

* Istôr. Pistol. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 34, 35, 36.—The bishop, reproaching him with ingratitude, in the face of the Bavarian, he answered in German, “that beasts worked by dint of spurs and the whip,” and the bishop adding that he should explain himself better, Castruccio replied, “that he was not the teacher of children.” The Bavarian burst into loud laughter, and the bishop departed in anger.—*Tig. Vita Cas.*

them, and did not disdain to receive even Castruccio within them, he died of a broken heart. Before, however receiving him, the Pisans sustained a siege of more than a month, and were chiefly assisted in money by the Florentines. He might have been able to maintain himself longer, and perhaps weary the Bavarian, who panted to go to Rome, if those who governed Pisa had been of one accord; but the cunning Castruccio was master of the means of sowing dissensions. The voices of the young Count Fazio and of Banduccio Buonconti being gained by Castruccio, who promised peace, were listened to by the people, who always suffer in sieges. It is true that it was agreed upon, that Castruccio should not enter Pisa, but it was easy to see that this article would not be observed, as indeed it was not. The Pisans had reason to repent of the agreement, since, besides the 60,000 florins which they had agreed to pay of their own accord, they were taxed with another heavier contribution of 100,000. Already, two years ago, Pisa had been obliged, after a battle she had lost at sea, to cede Sardinia to the King of Arragon: hence these burthens, after she had suffered so great a decrease in revenue and commerce, gave a new blow to her power. The occupation of that city greatly disheartened the Florentines, who feared the tempest was about to break over them.

Much as the Bavarian was instigated by Castruccio, great as was the ascendancy he held over his mind, the ambition of being crowned in Rome made him hasten his departure for that city. He first, however, went to Lucca, where he was received with great magnificence by Castruccio, whom he created Duke of Lucca, Pistoia, Volterra, Prato, San Gemignano, and Colle; and many castles were surrendered to him which belonged to the

Pisan republic*. The Bavarian was delighted with the wisdom, the foresight, and the valour, of this man,—and wished to take him with him to Rome, in order to derive advantage from his counsel; and although Cas-
 1327. truccio, fearful of treachery, did not like to absent himself from his territory; he nevertheless suffered himself to be prevailed upon to accompany him. It was thought that the Bavarian, after the coronation, would enter hostilely the kingdom of Naples; to this was added the dread of Frederic, King of Sicily, with whom the Bavarian was in alliance; and the consternation was increased by the presence of Castruccio,—wherefore the Duke of Calabria thought it prudent to return to his father, in order to keep a vigilant eye over the defence of the kingdom, leaving Philip of Sanguineto his vice-regent in Florence†. The Duke of Calabria departed
 1328. for Naples, and Castruccio for Rome, almost at the same time, but by different roads. In the absence of the pope, the same factions reigned in that city, as in the rest of Italy. The Bavarian stopped at Viterbo, whilst they were deliberating in Rome whether he was to be received. He was, however, not idle; and knowing that the Lord of Viterbo, who had received him graciously, possessed great riches there, which he had secreted, he ordered him to be arrested, and made him disclose them by tortures: and thus, despoiled of his property and his dominion, he was afterwards sent prisoner to Rome under false pretexts. These facts may serve as a consolation to our readers for the injustice of their own times, which they will observe is no novelty. Castruccio arrived at Viterbo, and by his dexterity, wisdom, and eloquence, disposed the Romans to receive the new

* Tigr. Vita Castruc.

† Vill. lib. 10. c. 50.

emperor*. Upon the arrival of the Duke of Bavaria, the party that favoured King Robert being driven out by the Colonesi and other Ghibellines, the duke was crowned emperor in Rome, and was indebted for his good reception and pacific ingress, in great measure, to the Lucchese hero, whom he created his viceroy and senator in Rome. Before the Roman people Castruccio eclipsed even the imperial grandeur. Preceded by the fame of his exploits, the splendour of his court rivalled, and perhaps surpassed, in luxury that of the emperor; his dresses, his uniforms, his mottoes, under the veil of resignation to Heaven, discovered only his ambitious views†. The pope had fulminated his censures against the Bavarian and his followers. The latter now wished to take revenge upon him, and depose the pope. Various circumstances made this act applauded by the Romans.

Before the entrance into Italy of the Bavarian,
 1328. being discontented at the absence of the pope, they had invited him by solemn embassy to return to his true seat, but in vain; then it was that they encouraged the Bavarian.

A theological dispute added to excite a powerful party against John XXII. The minor friars, with more candour than sense, had undertaken to preach a doctrine which was very dangerous to the interests of churchmen; viz., evangelical poverty: maintaining that Jesus Christ and the apostles possessed nothing. The Dominicans opposed this doctrine, and were supported by the whole

* Istor. Pistolesi. "If it had not been for the good sense of Castruccio the Bavarian would not have been received.

† He shewed himself dressed in a robe of crimson, on the upper part of which were these words: *He is that which God wishes*; and on the other side; *He shall be what God chooses*.—Giov. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 60. Macchi. Vita di Castr. Manuzio.

pontifical court, asserting that Jesus Christ and his disciples held possessions, because they had the use of the goods of the earth. They added that Judas Iscariot was the steward and dispenser of the goods that they possessed, and carried on a war of words with scholastical subtilty and obscure distinctions upon the nature of use and possession. The luxury and the riches of the court of Avignon, to which this doctrine was a high reproach, anathematized it as a great piece of heresy; and a pope, who was known for being the most covetous of men of the estates of this world, took a severe revenge upon those friars, by condemning them to the practical exercise of their doctrine,—that is, of being rendered incapable of holding possessions*. They then began to blaspheme the head of the church, and gave their opinion to the Bavarian, who was bold enough to declare him an illegitimate pope, and caused another to be elected from the order of the Minors; viz., Pietro di Corvara, with the title of Nicolas V., who until then had enjoyed the reputation of sanctity; but, seduced by ambition, he suffered himself to be prevailed upon to accept the dangerous honour. Amongst the other laws, at that time established by the anti-pope and anti-emperor, was one, (in order to flatter the Roman people,) that the pope could not remain more than three months absent from Rome without forfeiting his sublime post. The new pope, with the usual pompous ceremonies, gave the imperial crown to the Bavarian, and created cardinals.

In the mean time a conspiracy which had been contrived in Florence by two Pistoiese outlaws, caused

* We have followed scrupulously in this account, Alb. Muss. *Ref. Ital.* tom. x. Ludov. Bav. *Gio. Vill.* lib. 9. cap. 156. Balayt. *Vita Pap.* Platina adds that some defenders of that assertion were burnt.

Castruccio the loss of Pistoia. The design was concerted with Philip of Sanguineto, who ordered the necessary instruments for passing the bridges and scaling the walls to be secretly prepared in Prato. Leaving Florence in the dusk of evening, at the end of January, with picked troops, fit for the enterprise, and assisted by their partisans, they suddenly arrived by night at Pistoia: where the city was least inhabited, they scaled the walls; and in other parts broke them down. The soldiers of Castruccio, being awakened, attacked the enemy with so much impetuosity, that they succeeded in driving them beyond the walls; but being led again to the assault by Philip, the troops of Castruccio were obliged finally to yield to numbers; many prisoners were made, among the rest a nephew of Castruccio, son of Philip Tedici, and a nephew of the latter, both young boys, who were led in triumph to Florence, and Pistoia was exposed to all the horrors of plunder*. At the news of this misfortune, Castruccio hastily left Rome, and leaving behind him five hundred horse and 1,000 bowmen, who marched but slowly, with only twelve horsemen he soon arrived in his states; by his presence awed those who were contriving innovations, and gave stability to the wavering. The first thing was to take permanent possession of the government of Pisa, by depriving the imperial ministers of all authority. A shadow of excuse coloured this act: the emperor, by taking him to Rome, had caused him the loss of Pistoia. The acquisition of Pisa more than sufficiently indemnified him for the loss of that city†, which, however, lay

* Istor. Pistol. Vill: lib. 10: c. 19.

† Vill. lib. 10: cap. 83. Istor. Pistol.

always at his heart. Having collected a chosen body of troops, he marched upon it, and surrounded it by siege. The garrison was numerous: there were not less than three hundred Florentine horse, and 1,000 infantry, besides the Pistoiese partisans of the Florentine government, and ready to defend them, but badly supplied with provisions, through avarice. The Florentines asserted that it depended upon the Duke of Calabria, or his Viceroy Philip to provision it, the Duke pretended the Florentines should have done it: and in the midst of this dispute the siege was laid to it. The accustomed provisions were then made; with the troops of the confederates, Philip marched an army very superior to that of Castruccio towards Pistoia, and sent immediately, according to the usage of the times, to challenge him to battle. The latter, who was inferior in
1399. troops, feigned to accept it, whilst he was only temporizing in order to fortify his camp; which he carried into effect with such masterly art, that Philip, in all his attempts, was repulsed with loss. The Pistoiese defended themselves bravely, making frequent sorties, and setting fire to the machines of Castruccio: but the latter well knew that famine was fighting for him. An enmity, however, which he bore towards the Pistoiese who had rebelled against him, transported him to cruelties. The Pieve, or parish church, at Montecucoli, situated two miles distant from the camp of Castruccio, was filled with Pistoiese troops, and from this place frequent sorties were made; but compelled by famine, it was obliged to capitulate. Castruccio would not receive the besieged upon any honourable condition: they therefore surrendered at discretion. The Pistoiese were hanged to the walls, the foreigners badly treated; which drew

down a cruel vengeance upon the prisoners in Pistoia, who were either cut to pieces or hanged *: so necessary is it to observe what are called the laws of war, or mutual respect, as well as that generosity which becomes warriors ; viz., that the battle being over, every hostility ought to cease, and the prisoners consider each

^{1323.} other as brethren. Philip endeavoured, by diversions upon the Lucchese and Pisan territories, to remove Castruccio from them. All was in vain ; Pistoia was finally obliged to capitulate, although on good conditions, and open her gates to a small army, almost in face of another so much superior, which had not been able to succour her. The siege lasted nearly three months, from the 13th of May to the 3rd of August. Castruccio was become still more great and powerful ; and although the occupation of Pisa had a little alienated the mind of the emperor, it might be foreseen, from the ascendant which he had over him, that it would not be difficult for him to regain him. In any event, in order to be ready to save himself, and not receive the laws of the Bavarian, Castruccio entered into a secret plan of agreement with the Florentines, who were greatly disheartened †.

^{1328.} The emperor was approaching Tuscany on one side ; on the other was Castruccio, who was still more formidable. The panic-struck Florentines, not trusting to the treaties of Castruccio, had begun to fortify the walls, foreseeing a siege ; nor can it be denied that their danger was extreme ; when the unexpected death of Castruccio at one blow liberated them from all dread. The siege of Pistoia probably occasioned his death, as well as that of many soldiers and officers : at the end of July, he stood the greater part of the day in the sun,

* Istor. Pistol.

† Gio. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 87.

in order to encourage those who were working either at the defence of his camp, or at the engines of offence against the enemy; nor did he disdain to put his own hand to the work, like the meanest of his soldiers. He was taken ill of a fever, which, in a few days, put an end to his life, on the 3rd of September, at the age of forty-seven years. Foreseeing his end approaching, he advised his sons, with the greatest presence of mind, to keep it concealed as much as possible, and in the mean time to receive the dispositions which he laid before them*.

Castruccio was tall and well made in person; of a fine countenance, pale, of light hair, which he wore undressed and upright. He had sense enough, in those times of credulity, to despise astrology; his natural eloquence was not without grace, which the dignity of his appearance rendered still more imposing: with the name alone of brother and of child, he often appeased the tumultuous soldiery; and as it is always best to command by example, he was the first to give the blow in battle, and the last to retreat. To him we are partly indebted for the re-establishment of the Italian army: foreigners were, until his time, the most disciplined, and enjoyed the best reputation; the Italians went in disorder to the fight, Castruccio disciplined them, and made them march regularly to the assault: in times of peace he caused the youth to be exercised in military evolutions, make sham assaults upon castles, and perform all that is practised in real warfare, and distributed premiums to the most dexterous. In battle, too, he was generally present in the most hazardous situations, and alternately animated, praised, and reprobated, the conduct of the
 1333. soldiery. Although the first warrior of his age,

* Vill. lib. 10. c. 87. Tigr. Vita Castr. Istor. Pistol.

it is doubted whether he was greater in arms or in council: although he was born and had lived in the midst of revolutions, he never shed blood unless when necessity demanded it. He was one of those great men who, although ignorant of letters himself, knew their value, and esteemed the learned. An encourager of useful arts and manufactures, he generously rewarded whoever introduced new ones. The monuments of the numerous works of public utility he undertook are still remaining, such as bridges, roads, and fortresses*. He was certainly an extraordinary man, and had the theatre of his actions been more extensive, and his means greater, he would have distinguished himself equally with any of the celebrated men of antiquity. In the small sphere, however, in which he was obliged to act, as a private individual, he became one of the most powerful princes of Italy; since, at his death, he possessed Lucca, Pisa, Pistoia, the Lunigiana, great part of the coast to the East of Genoa, and innumerable castles; and if he had lived longer, in those times of revolution, and the division of Italy into so many small sovereignties, it may be conjectured that his greatness would not have stopped here: he held the sovereignty of Lucca fifteen years. Henry, his eldest son, was heir to his father's estates,

* Tigr. Vita Castruc. The fortresses of Sarzanello, the tower of Pontremoli, the Fort of Nozzano, the Castle of Ghivizzano in Garfagnana, with many other fortresses, were erected by him: he made Lucca, for those times, invincible, and built the castle of Agosta: he erected the three bridges over the Lima: that over the Pescia has an inscription which bears testimony of him: by means of a bridge he united Castel Nuovo of the Garfagnana with the villa of Castiglione, nor was there a river or rivulet over which he did not build bridges; besides the many expensive roads through difficult passes, as for instance, from Montramito to Viareggio across the Marshes.

but not to his father's talents. The power of Lucca terminated with Castruccio, since shortly afterwards we see this city offered for sale, bought by a private citizen, and the cities and castles which were once occupied by Castruccio, retaken by the Florentines. Upon the arrival of the emperor, the sovereignty of Pisa, and afterwards that of Lucca, were taken away from his sons.

CHAPTER II.

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE.—ARRIVAL OF THE BAVARIAN AND ANTI-POPE AT PISA, WHO EXORTS LARGE SUMS FROM HIS FRIENDS, AND RETURNS TO GERMANY.—DESCENT UPON ITALY OF JOHN, KING OF BOHEMIA.—THE FLORENTINES REFUSE TO PURCHASE LUCCA, AND ARM THEMSELVES AGAINST IT.—THE GERMANS ASSUME THE DOMINION OVER IT.—LITTLE WARS BETWEEN PISA, MASSA, AND SIENNA.—INUNDATION IN FLORENCE.—VICISSITUDES OF AREZZO.—LUCCA UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE LORDS OF THE SCALA.—THE FLORENTINES MAKE A VAIN ATTEMPT TO PURCHASE IT.—WAR CARRIED ON BY THE FLORENTINES AGAINST MASTINO SCALA.—PEACE WITH MASTINO.

NOTHING more fortunate could have happened to the Florentines than the death of Castruccio ; and ^{1398.} although his formidable forces still remained assembled on the one side, and the emperor was already on his march against Tuscany on the other, they gave themselves little concern about either, since the soul, which alone gave activity and energy to so many distracted bodies, no longer existed. The republic, thus paying little regard to these movements, began to new regulate the state ; and the death of the Duke of Calabria, who had been Lord of the Florentines, considerably accelerated the reform ; as by that event the government freely returned into their own hands. The system remaining the same, the most difficult thing to be done, without exciting animosities, or shewing an inclination to favour, was the so-called *imborsazione*, or the choice of persons adapted for the employments, whose names, at a proper

time, were to be drawn by lots. This was an act which required much prudence and wisdom : since to the present magistrates, the priors, the councillors, the *gonfaloniere* of companies, captains of the Guelphan party, the five of commerce, and consuls of the arts, many of the people were to be added ; that is, two for a sixth for every magistrate, who, forming the number of twenty-eight persons, were intrusted with the discretion of nominating the citizens above thirty years of age, who were to be polled for. Those who were named, however, were obliged to submit to the poll, and became admitted upon obtaining sixty-four votes, if no powerful objection could be found against them. This regulation being approved of in full assembly, in the square of the priors, the old councils were annulled ; and two alone were established out of them, one of three hundred persons, into which plebeians only were admitted, of whom the captain of the people was the head ; the other of two hundred and fifty, at which the mayor presided, and which might consist of both the great and plebeians. The deliberations, however, which were made by the government, in order to have the force of a law, were to be approved first by the former, and afterwards by the second council. The method was excellent, had not the domineering spirit of the Guelphan faction afterwards disconcerted it*.

The Bavarian arrived at Pisa, and was followed shortly afterwards by the anti-pope, who made a solemn entry, accompanied by a magnificent cavalcade. ^{1339.} Here the comedy which had been played off in Rome, against Pope John, was publicly renewed. The Bavarian, after a long discourse from Michelino of Cesena, a minor friar, after having accused the pope of many

* Giov. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 112. Amm. lib. 7.

crimes, deposed him ; when the anti-pope, in a solemn oration, confirmed the sentence of the Bavarian by excommunicating the pope, King Robert, and all the Florentines, who were enemies to the Bavarian and to the Pisans. Pious persons, however, were ashamed of this act, and interpreted a storm of rain and hail which happened on that day, and particularly the death of the king's chamberlain, as signs of the divine wrath. The latter, strolling about Pisa, and summoning the people to attend that harangue, got a severe cold ; and going into a bath of distilled water in the evening, which took fire, he died a miserable death *. The foolish vulgar, who are always ready to penetrate the secrets of Heaven, did not consider that the anti-pope, the Bavarian, and the preacher, were more guilty than the chamberlain, and that upon them the vengeance would have fallen if Heaven had chosen it. The emperor undertook no affair of importance in this journey into Italy ; his arrival was more prejudicial to his friends, from whom he extorted large sums of money, than to his enemies, with whom he carried on the war only by treachery, which is always attended with greater disgrace when it does not succeed ; by this means he endeavoured to occupy Florence, and brought only a cruel death upon those citizens who were employed in the conspiracy †. He was always wanting money, although he placed all under contribution. Besides the sums which were paid by the Pisans, Lucca was taxed in 250,000 florins in gold ; 10,000 were to be paid by the widow of Castruccio, that her sons might continue in the government of Lucca, and she was afterwards deluded ; 4,000 by Raimond of Cardona for his ransom ;

* Vill. lib. 10 c. 115, 116. 146. Tron. Ann. Pis.

† Vill. lib. 10. c. 118.

and 22,000 by Francis Castracani Antelminelli for having been appointed Viceroy of Lucca. Notwithstanding so many extortions, he was unable to pay his soldiers, and suffered them to commit all kinds of disorder; in fact, 800 German horse, for want of pay, rebelled against him; and having endeavoured in vain to make themselves masters of Lucca, occupied the Cèruglio, a very strong fort of Castruccio, threatening to give it to the Florentines. The emperor sent them Mark Visconti, who promised them 70,000 florins if they would return into Lombardy, to which the soldiers
^{1329.} agreed, but retained Mark as hostage for the payment. His nephew Azzo, who was about the emperor, and who had been deprived by him of the state of Milan, promised to disburse 125,000 florins in gold to pay the soldiers, if the emperor would send him back into his own states. The agreement was accepted: Azzo departed with Porcaro*, who had been imperial viceroy in Lucca, who was ill disposed towards him, and whom Azzo conducted to Milan. That state was given back into his hands by the viceroy, to whom Azzo paid 25,000 florins. He afterwards fortified himself in that city, paying no regard to the payment of the remainder, thinking it a proper time to take revenge on the emperor, who, without any reason, had already deprived him of his states, and detained him prisoner. The emperor, seeing himself thus held in contempt, left Pisa for Lombardy, in order to take revenge upon Azzo; but it was now no longer time. The Lombard gentlemen had almost all withdrawn themselves from his alliance, seeing that this man had done nothing more than plunder his friends, without

* It appears, according to the explanation of Villani, that this word, corrupted, signifies burgravio.

at all molesting the enemy. Azzo Visconti defended himself with troops and with money; and the Bavarian returned immediately into Germany.

In order, however, that the wretched Italy might never be without the scourge of greedy foreigners, John,

^{1329.} King of Bohemia, son of the Emperor Henry VII., immediately appeared, who began by treading in the footsteps of the Bavarian. The deluded Germans of Ceruglio, knowing his talents, first made the author of the treaty, Mark Visconti, prisoner, and then captain. When the emperor was gone, Mark occupied Lucca, driving away the new imperial viceroy; and, as his band were in search only of money, he offered it to the Florentine republic for sale. A more advantageous opportunity could not have presented itself for obtaining for a small sum of money a city which had been the rival of Florence, and which, by its position, held in subjection Pisa and Pistoia, together with many other advantages. It became a subject of debate in council, for a considerable time; whether this purchase should be made, which would have amounted probably to 80,000 florins; and the spirit of party alone caused it to be disapproved of. Pino Tosa and the Bishop of Florence were the authors of the treaty. Simón Tosa, who was of a contrary party, opposed it with very frivolous reasons, but which, being supported by the Florentine parsimony, finally prevailed. Upon the treaty being afterwards renewed, rich citizens were found, who, taking into consideration the manifest advantages to be derived from it, proposed to purchase it at their own expense, to be afterwards reimbursed by the community; but the contrary party put them to silence by threats,—a great, but not an uncommon, example of sacrificing the native country to self-love and private

pique*. The Pisans who, scarce was the emperor gone, had regained their liberty, by expelling the viceroy, wished to get possession of Lucca, by the offer of 60,000 florins : but having paid down the sum too readily to persons of a conscience not sufficiently delicate, they lost the money without obtaining the city†. This treaty awakened the jealousy of the Florentines, who, notwithstanding the influence of party, were sufficiently aware of this error, to march their army against the Pisans. After having suffered so many losses and extortions of

 1339. money, the latter were no longer in a condition to undertake a new war ; and, seeking peace, it was immediately concluded, upon the agreement that they were not to meddle with the affairs of Lucca ; with some other conditions, among which was, that they were to effect a reconciliation with the pontiff. This stipulation carried with it the abjuration of the anti-pope. After the departure of the emperor, this man had remained concealed in a castle of Count Fazio, who saw himself obliged to consign it to the Pisans. It was of so much consequence to Pope John to secure himself against a dangerous rival, that he gave Count Fazio castles and ecclesiastical benefices ; to other pious citizens he made generous presents, passing his benediction, and paying the greatest honours to the Pisan republic. The anti-pope, thus abandoned by all, recanted his errors ; and being conducted to Avignon, and consigned to the pope, who treated him well, was kept in a courteous

* Vill. lib. 10. c. 136. This writer was one of those citizens who privately associated to purchase it, and disclosed the piques and ridiculous pretexes of the adversaries.

† Vill. lib. 10. c. 138.

imprisonment, in which he died three years afterwards; and thus Pisa renewed her alliance with the pope*.

Lucca, which had so frequently been put up to auction, finally came into the possession of Gherardino Spinola for 30,000 florins†. The want of foresight of the Florentines appeared here very manifest, who, perceiving the error they had committed, began to make war on Gherardine, in order to obtain, by power of arms and at a large expense, a city which had been offered them so cheap. In this war they took many castles from the Lucchese, and finally pitched their camp around Lucca. Spinola, who, dazzled by the splendour of the enterprises of Castruccio, thought perhaps that his power arose from the possession of that city, began to perceive that he had loaded himself with a burthen too heavy for his shoulders. An accommodation was then entered into, by which the Florentines would have gained possession of Lucca upon equitable conditions; but on their side the treaty was managed with so much bad faith, and being entered into at once both with the Lucchese and Spinola, the latter got advice of it, and the treaty was broken‡.

In the mean time a disturbance broke out in the camp of the Florentines. Their captain, Castruccio Gabrielli, wished to hang a soldier; the man, on going to death, implored the aid of his companions, in number about 600, who, taking up arms, rescued their companion from the hands of the executioner, sacked and set fire to the

* Gio. Vill. lib. 10. c. 164. Marang. Cron. di Pis.

† The same, 145.

‡ The historian Villani had been one of the mediators with the Lucchese, and condemns his fellow-citizens.

house of the captain, and almost routed the army. Castruccio had carried a greater execution into effect, without any one daring to speak of it; of so much importance is the ascendancy of one man*. Spinola, seeing the disturbances in the city and the camp increase, offered the government of Lucca to John, King of Bohemia, who, as we have seen, had recently arrived in Italy. He accepted the offer; sent ambassadors to the Florentines out of formality, that they might desist from their enterprise, and at the same time a succour of 800 horse to the Lucchese. The Florentines, hearing that the latter were approaching and were to be followed by the remaining troops of King John, thought fit to retreat. That king did not come forward; but, entering into treaties with the legate of the pope, who, for his own interest, was an enemy to the Florentines†, they began to suspect they were abandoned by the pope, their
^{1331.} ancient ally, and that John entertained hostile views towards them. The suspicion was not without foundation. John was the son of their great enemy, the Emperor Henry VII., who had died with the disgrace of having retired from the city of Florence unrevenged; hence the son might have inherited the paternal hatred. The friendship, too, which had taken place, as a rare example, between the emperor and the pontiff, increased the fear. In the mean time the little

* Gio. Vill. lib. 10. c. 173.

† The legate pretended to have, as a simple benefice, the parish church of the Impruneta, which was at that time vacant. The Buondelmonti, as founders, were masters of it. The legate maintained that the right of collation was pontifical. The Florentine people took the part of Buondelmonti; and the legate, not being able to do more, put Florence under an interdict.—Vill. lib. 10. c. 182.

war was carried on with Lucca. The 800 Germans arrived, and assumed the dominion ; no condition
^{1332.} was maintained with Spinola, and the man who had made that purchase, more like a merchant than a prince, reckoning upon the gain he could make of it, lost his money, which was the most sensible wound that could be inflicted upon such a character.

Pistoia, after the death of Castruccio, being agitated by various factions, had afterwards entered into an accommodation with Florence. New disturbances having arisen in the last year, the Florentines entered the city by means of their favourers, and obliged the citizens to transfer to them the government for a year, together with the power of making reforms. The justice with which they exercised the command procured them a reconfirmation in it every two years.

^{1332.} The Siennese, in the mean time, were extending their territory. In the year 1331, when contending with the counts of San Fiora, they had taken away from them Scansano, Arcidosso, Castel del Piano, and obliged them to receive their laws, and sue for peace. King John, who, like all the princes that came into Italy, supported feudal tyrants, had sent 250 horse in succour of the counts, who were defeated by Guido, captain-general of the Siennese, near Castello Accarigi. The city of Massa was occupied by the Pisans ; and a little war was entered into between the latter and the Siennese. The people of Massa, feigning a treaty of giving the city to the Siennese, drew their army there. The Pisans approached to intercept them. Fortunately, Guido, captain of the Siennese, united himself with many other troops, which Piccolomini kept to guard those castles, and attacked them together on the 14th of December, and routed the Pisans, the captain of whom was taken

with 200 soldiers. In spite, however, of this
 1332. loss, the Pisans, who had been reinforced with new troops, made inroads upon the Siennese territory, and did much damage to it, whilst the Siennese captain ventured not to attack them, and the Florentines denied them succour, in order that the rich merchandise they had in Pisa might not be confiscated. By the insinuation of the pope, and mediation of the Bishop of Florence, peace was made between them*, upon the restitution of the territory which had been taken from the people of Massa by the Siennese, and the Pisans were obliged to leave Massa free, the safe custody of which was intrusted to the Florentines.

The power and the violence exercised by the family of Ubaldini, had often put the district of Mugello in confusion, but they were now the friends and dependants of the Florentine republic. In order, however, to curb them still more, a very strong place was built beyond the neck of the Apennines upon the river Santerno. Amongst those deputed to superintend this work, was the Historian John Villani, to whom the option was reserved of giving a name to the place, which he chose to call *Fiorenzuola* † or little Florence.

The suspicions of a secret agreement between the pope and King John increasing, the Florentines, without thinking further of their ancient enmity towards the Ghibellines, made a league with the Lombard lords, who were
 1332. enemies of that king and the pontiff. Such were the Lords or Signiors of Este, the Scaligeri Lords of Verona, the Visconti of Milan, Rusca Captain of Como, Gonzaga of Mantua, Guido Filippino and Feltrino, those of

* Cron. San. Maler. 156. San. Pan. 12. lib. 5 Gio. Vill. 10. c. 214.

† G. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 203.

Correggio, who left room for King Robert and others to join them.

In the mean time the confederacy between the pope and King John was drawn still closer; blows
 1333. were exchanged between the son of this king and the Marquis D' Este, near Modena, where the marquis was discomfited, who again trying the fate of arms against the people of the pontiff, was a second time defeated, and made prisoner; and Ferrara was besieged *. The city would have fallen into the hands of the pope, the more so as King John was preparing to approach Parma in aid of the besiegers, but the allies endeavoured to prevent him, and sending a picked squadron of three hundred horse, which joined the other succours near Ferrara, they determined upon attacking the enemy, who was very well entrenched. On the
 1332. 14th of April an obstinate conflict ensued; but the besieged were beaten with great slaughter, and being shut up between the city and the assailants, with the river full of boats armed with the allies, escaped either death, or being taken prisoners. Two Florentine captains particularly distinguished themselves, Scali and Strozzi; and attacking the people of Languedoc, commanded by the Count D' Armagnac, made him prisoner, with many French barons†. After this defeat the pontifical party began to decline, receiving little support

* Vill. lib. 10. c. 206. 216. Stor. Pistol.

† Vill. lib. 10. c. 218. Istor. Pistol. Amm. Istor. Fior. Here, by mistake, the Count D' Armagnac is given for dead in the battle, but was afterwards found alive, and so full of pride, as to refuse being exchanged with one of the Marquises D' Este, protesting that he would not be placed on an equality with a lesser man than himself.

from King John, who, being weak in troops, and without money, appeared disposed soon to leave Italy. But wishing to draw some advantage from Lucca, and not finding a better bargain, he gave it in pledge of 35,000 florins in gold to the Rossi of Parma, and shortly afterwards abandoned Italy.

In the month of November of this year, one of the greatest inundations happened in Florence, of which we have any record: three of the four bridges were
 1333. broken down, and that of the Rubaconte, which remained, was very much damaged: the remembrance of this accident is preserved in two inscriptions, the one in Latin, and the other in Italian, engraven upon the old bridge at the East and the West. In the destruction of the old bridge, the supposed statue of Mars fell down, and was carried away by the flood; but it was already much dilapidated and consumed by time, and hardly retained the effigy of what it once had been*. At the old palace, which is situated in the highest part of Florence, the water covered the first step of the great stair, and one half of the columns of porphyry of St. John's was under water. This scourge became universal over the whole of Tuscany, the soil of which, on account of the continued rains night and day, was converted into an inundation of rivers, the beds of which were too small for the sudden increase of the waters. The damage done to Florence was immense, as well as to Pisa and Val D' Arno. Empoli, and many other places were half destroyed. The Tiber also did great damage in Rome†.

* Boccac. lez. sul Canto 13 del Infer. di Dante.

† Vill. lib. ii. cap. i.

The pontifical affairs in Italy were now continually growing worse. The confederates, after the
^{1334.} liberation of Ferrara, laid siege to Argenta, whilst the legate, with the remainder of his army, returned to Bologna. Every treaty of peace being unsuccessful, and Argenta being taken, they hastened as far as Bologna, where the legate, not thinking that his French soldiers would have marched to conquer the enemy, exhorted the Bolognese companies to unite themselves with him. But the latter, weary of the harsh government, and the cruelties exercised by foreigners, rebelled, cut them to pieces, and the legate, with a few men, took refuge in the castle, where he was besieged by the Bolognese. He would have easily fallen into their hands if the Florentines, although they were his enemies, being moved by reverence towards the Holy See, had not sent troops, who took him with difficulty out of the hands of the Bolognese, and conducted him to Florence*; whence he soon departed for Avignon, with the mortification † of being indebted to his enemies for his safety. When he arrived there, he related his adventures to the pontiff, John XXII; and did not omit publicly praising the generosity of the Florentines, although in secret he painted them in the most odious colours, attri-
^{1334.} buting to them all the misfortunes that had happened to his arms. The enraged pope would have sought revenge had not death, which soon followed, prevented him; after which it became easy for Florence to make a peace with the new pope, by returning to the

* Amongst those who accompanied him was one of the most learned men of those times John D' Andrea, originally of Mugello, professor in Bologna, "a greater than whom canonical science for many ages had not boasted."

† Vill. lib. 11. c. 6.

ancient system. The Pope John left immense treasures, the amount of which, if not exaggerated, has never been possessed by any sovereign*.

The Florentines were at this time almost at peace, if we except the part they took with the allies of Lombardy in wars with a small contingent which they kept there by agreement of the confederacy; and the trifling and interrupted hostilities they carried on against the Lucchese. Arezzo, in the mean time, that had suffered various vicissitudes, followed the fate of almost all the small republics in Italy, which were governed under the name and form of a free government, by some powerful family, and was exactly in this situation under the Tarlati. The bishop, William Tarlati, once an ally of the Lucchese and of Castruccio, in the time of the depression of the Florentines, had given a power to his family, and consequently to Arezzo, which excited the envy of Florence. The bishop becoming afterwards an enemy of Castruccio, as we have already seen, Piero, his brother, upon his death inherited his power and his talents, by which means the Aretine republic had made

* Villani relates that the sum in money amounted to 18,000,000 of florins in gold, and seven more in jewels. He adds, "and we can give full faith and true testimony thereof, that it was told our carnal brother, a man worthy of credit who was then in the court, a merchant of the pope, who by the treasurers and others, was deputed to count and weigh the said treasure, in order to make a report thereof to the college of the cardinals to put in the inventory." He then relates the means of amassing it. The good Villani makes his just reflections, thereon. In order to have a proper idea of that sum, we must reduce it to the value of our own times, that is, by taking the reduction of the ancient money by Robertson, to 125,000,000 of sequins. Every sensible person will easily conceive there must be a great exaggeration. It is true that all writers agree upon the immense treasure left by him.

herself mistress of the city of Castello, (città di Castello), of Borgo, of Cagli, of Massa Trebara, with all the castles belonging to these cities. The Perugians, their rivals, made themselves masters of Borgo by secret stratagem; and growing bold by this success, and joining their troops to those of William, Lord of Cortona, they made inroads upon the territory of Arezzo, thinking that the Aretines, panic-struck at the loss of Borgo, would not venture to make a sortie: but Piero
 1335. Tarlati, celebrated under the name of Pier Saccone, marching against them, attacked and defeated them, and followed them even to the walls of Cortona, where they shut themselves up in dismay, whilst the Aretines scoured the Perugian territory, laying it waste even to the gates of the city. In spite, however, of this victory, the Perugians took Citta di Castello from them by treachery*; not without exciting a secret pleasure in the Florentines, to whom, although they were in peace and amity with the Aretines the newly increasing power of the latter gave umbrage; and which, after the repeated shocks, and the losses suffered by the Tarlati, of many castles in the Valley of the Umbra, (Val d'Ambra), began anew to decline.

A new regulation of police which was made in these times in Florence is worthy of observation, in order to shew how dangerous it is to leave in the hands of magistrates, particularly those intrusted with criminal jurisdiction, an arbitrary and discretionary power,
 1335. which they find too easy to abuse, instead of making it the simple executor of the law. The executors of justice had been very much increased since the last year, and seven captains of the guard had been

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 37.

created, called *Bargellini*, or little sheriffs: each of whom commanded twenty-five armed infantry, under colour of watching over the safety of the republic against the outlaws and their correspondents; but in reality, (and in order to secure the reins of government in the hands of those who held them), the executors acted by the secret instigation of these persons. In this year, that this system might acquire greater strength and unanimity, and depend upon one will, a captain of the guard, or conservator, was created, who held a command over fifty horse and a hundred foot, and had a right to arrest whoever he pleased; to exile, and carry the most sanguinary executions into effect, without even an *order of statute*, or giving any account but to those with whom they were in intelligence. The first who held this office, was Messer Jacopo Gabbrielli of Gubbio, who, after a year of tyrannical and despotic government, returned to his native country very much enriched. His successor incurred the anger of the people still more; who, assembling in bodies, armed themselves with stones, fell upon the executors, and obliged the government, after two years' duration of the office, to abolish it*.

1335. After so many disputes about the possession of Lucca, the Florentines were greatly surprised and panic-struck, when they saw it fall into the hands of the most powerful house of Lombardy, of the Lords Scala, (Signori della Scala).

The origin of this family, which became so illustrious for its valour, magnificence, for the love of letters and sciences, is concealed, like the greater part of the others, in obscurity: since the officious genealogists, appearing always to stop at a celebrated man,

* Gio. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 16. 39.

that he may form the origin, venture not a step beyond him, where it may begin to grow uncertain. Villani, who is more simple, and less flattering, makes their ancestors builders, or makers of ladders or stairs, (scale); deriving their name from the employment they were engaged in*; whilst others call them feudal lords, in Burgundy, from which province they came into Italy†, and the verses of Ferreto Vicentino render still more magnificent the Cane and La Scala, names which have been so little illustrated by the learned‡. The man who first established their power in Verona, was Mastino, who, after having been mayor in 1260, was elected perpetual captain. Being put to
^{1335.} death by conspirators, his brother Albert succeeded him, and enjoyed greater fortune, by permanently establishing the house in twenty-one years of government, and extending their dominion. Of his descendants, Francis Can elevated the family to the highest pitch of power and glory, both by his wisdom and the sword: courageous in his person, and almost always the conqueror, he well earned from the public the title of great, a title confirmed to him by the mag-

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 94.

† Cort. Ist. di Vers. lib. 8.

‡ The names of Cane, of Mastino, continued in the family, as also of the Scala, suppose some particular fact not well known. Ferr., the Vicentine, too, after having said hic (that is, in Verona),

*Cæcis orta latebris
 Nobilitas,*

gives the etymology of the name of dog,

*Mater in amplexu cari diffusa mariti
 Membra fovebat ovans, blandaque in imagine somni
 Visa sibi est peperisse canem, qui fertibus armis
 Terrebatque suis totum latratibus orbem
 Illum etiam medios vibrantem tela per hostes.
 Cernebat, summæque gradus attollere scalæ, &c.*

Ferr. Vicen. Carmen de Scalig. Orig. lib. 2. Rer. Ital. tom. 9.

nificence and generosity he displayed towards the learned, and the illustrious unfortunate in general.

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He was succeeded by his nephews, Albert and Mastino, with very different talents; the former was of a pacific disposition, and given to letters, the second was covetous of dominion, and ambitious in war, and under him this illustrious house began to decline. As long, however, as the fame of the uncle, and his vast states existed, the Florentines beheld him with terror taking possession of Lucca; because, by thus setting his foot in Tuscany, he might do very serious injury to the Florentine republic, and much more by means of a faction which was hostile to that which governed Florence. Nor were the Florentines ignorant that he was endeavouring to make himself master of Pisa. It had already been covenanted in the confederacy with the Lombard lords, that the Rossi were to sell Lucca to the Florentines, at which the latter raised loud complaints. Mastino alleged various pretexts, and finally declared he was ready to re-sell it; but that reckoning the money to be paid to the Rossi, (who held it as viceroys of the King of Bohemia*,) and to the king himself, the Florentines could not obtain Lucca for less than 300,000 florins in gold; little thinking they would pay so large a sum. But the acquisition of it appeared to them now so important, terrified as they were, at the near approach of Mastino; and so great was the opulence of the Florentines, that it was

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determined upon to purchase with so exorbitant a sum, a city which had been refused for 80,000 florins by the company of Ceruglio, and for a still less sum by Gherardino Spinola.

Mastino, who was aspiring to the kingdom of Lom-

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 44. 45. Istor. Pistol.

bardy, of Tuscany, and perhaps of all Italy, and who thus saw the key of Tuscany snatched away from him, and not wanting money*, when the Florentine ambassadors offered to pay the sum required, adduced such frivolous causes of delay, that finally the enraged ambassadors departed from his court, and he began the war against the republic, by ordering his troops to make inroads immediately from Lucca into Valdinievole.

The Florentines, perceiving the danger they were exposed to in this war, and the difficulty of opposing the power of Mastino, if he should succeed in attacking them with all his force, procured a diversion: and knowing that the Venetians were hostile to him for many reasons, entered into an alliance with them, by which they were to hold themselves bound to keep 2,000 horse in pay, and as many infantry in Lombardy, in order that the Venetians might employ them against Mastino†. The latter, the more to molest the Florentines, made a treaty with the Aretines, and sent them 800 horse which were to march there through Forli; but the passage was prevented them by the people of the Florentines, united with those of the Bolognese and the Manfredi lords or signiors of Faenza.

The confederacy was now drawn still closer between the Florentines, the Bolognese, and the Perugians who were joined by the King of Naples. In the mean time Piero Ròssi came to Florence, who had been once Lord of Parma, of Lucca, and Pontremoli, but, being driven from his states, and Pontremoli

* It was said that after the King of France, there was no one so powerful as Mastino; master of ten great cities, of many castles, with a revenue of 700,000 florins in gold. It was reported that he had ordered a crown of gold to be made for him, with which he was to be crowned King of Lombardy and Tuscany.

† Vill. lib. 11. cap. 48. 49. Istor. Pistol.

besieged by the troops of Mastino, implored succour from the Florentines. When introduced into the presence of the magistrate, he spoke with so much vehemence against Mastino, declaring only that he sought an opportunity of acting hostilely towards him, that it was thought impossible to select a better captain for the war, about to be carried on in Tuscany. Being furnished with troops by the Florentines, in order to force the troops of Mastino to raise the siege of Pontremoli, he thought proper to repair towards Lucca, when the lieutenant-general of

Mastino made a sortie; but being inferior to the
1336. Florentines, dared not hazard a battle. Rossi,

however, taking him at Ceruglio, forced him to it; defeated him, and made him prisoner with thirteen officers*. Piero could not have commenced his enterprise with greater success; but the Lombard princes, allied with the Florentines, knowing his value, desired to have him as captain of their army, together with his brother Marsilio; and he readily went to display his talents in a more ample sphere, and nearer to his capital enemy, leaving his brother Orlando captain of the Florentines, who, indeed, however superior in ferocity, was greatly inferior in talents to his brothers. Piero, with less force than Mastino, had always the superiority in the field, and obliged him either to remain shut up in the city, or entrenched in strong places, whilst he continued laying waste the territory of Padua, of Mestre, and Treviso. He finally wounded him in the most sensible part, by taking the forts that were erected in defence of the salt works, a principal cause of the differences, and consequently of the war, between Mastino and the Venetians†. Turning his mind to greater achievements, he frequently

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 51. Istor. Pistol. loc. cit.

† Vill. lib. 11. cap. 56.

attempted to occupy the city of Padua: and he would have succeeded, if, whilst going himself with a ^{1337.} small escort in the night to surprise the borough of St. Mark (San Marco), the people whom he had ordered to follow him, and to be at break of day at the same town or borough, had not missed the road in the dark. After wandering about in great uncertainty, they returned to the camp, and Piero had the good fortune to make his retreat unmolested.

Mastino, void of generosity and full of meanness, perceiving what sort of an enemy he had to contend with in Piero, endeavoured to get rid of him, by instigating some German officers to put him to death. The conspiracy was discovered, and the officers, in order to avoid the penalty, with a suite of more than a thousand horse, left the army, setting fire to the encampments. The overbearing pride, and in- ^{1337.} tolerable power of Mastino, had awakened the jealousy of the other Lombard princes: his first misfortunes made a great part of them unite with the Venetians and Florentines, in order to effect his more certain destruction*. He continued the war with but little success: for the Aretines, his allies, unable to obtain succours, found themselves in a bad plight, being pressed on one side by the Florentines, on the other by the Perugians. They therefore resolved to submit for ten years to the government of the Florentines, limiting however, greatly their authority, and were received under it. Weary of so many internal and external agitations, they appear to have expected, by this resignation, some tranquillity under the protection of the Florentines. This hope brought a crowd of people for two miles out of Arezzo, with boughs of olive, to meet twelve citizens, who

* Giov. Vill. lib. 11. c. 61.

were sent from Florence to regulate the state, and to whom the highest honours were paid. The Tarlati contributed greatly to this enterprise, who having held the government for a long time, saw it at present tottering. Pietro Saccone, however, drew all the profit from it he could; 25,000 florins in gold being paid him for Arezzo, 14,000 for the Viscounty of Val d'Ambra, which had been already acquired by his brother the bishop*.

The alliance of the Florentines with the Venetians was, in the mean time confirmed, as well as with all the other Lombard princes †, for the destruction of the Scala or Scaligeri. Mastino, marching towards Mantua, had gone to Bovolento, in order to prevent both the
 1337. union of Piero Rossi with his brother Marsilio, and the transport of provisions. But Piero, knowing that the camp of Mastino could get no other water to drink than that of the canal between Bovolento and Chioggia, ordered so much dirt and filth to be thrown into it, thereby rendering it so fetid and impure, that Mastino was obliged to raise the camp. Padua was garrisoned by Albert Scala: within the walls were the Carrara, once lords of Padua, but who were now very ill treated by Albert. Piero held a secret correspondence with them, and approaching that city with his army, was let into it, made Albert prisoner, and the command was given to the family of Carrara ‡. Piero, bent still

* Pier Saccone came to Florence (see Vill. lib. 11. c. 69.), with a retinue of more than one hundred persons on horseback. In the six days he remained there, he gave splendid banquets to the Florentines, and the last day, in Santa Croce, one of the most magnificent, at which more than 1000 of the most respectable citizens sat at the first table.

† These were Azzo Visconti, Lord of Milan, Obigo, Marquis d'Este, Luigi Gonzaga of Mantua.

‡ Contus. Hist. tom. XII. Rer. Ital. Gio. Vill. lib. 11. c. 64.

more upon the destruction of his enemy, without stopping a moment after the taking of Padua, marched to attack the castle of Monselice, where, finding himself in the
 1337. thickest of the conflict, and fighting in the outer gate, after having gained the square, he was wounded by a lance in the side between the joining of the armour. In spite of this blow, and drawing the lance from his side, he endeavoured to pass the ditch; but the pain of the wound growing more severe, and the blood gushing out in great quantity, he ordered himself to be placed in a boat, and conducted to Padua, where he soon died. The affectionate grief expressed by the soldiers, even the mercenaries, the consternation into which the party, of which he was captain, was thrown, the joy evinced by the enemy, form his best eulogy. His funeral was celebrated with pomp in Padua, in Venice and in Florence, nor was it long before his brother Marsilio, from a fever contracted by the constant fatigues of war, and by grief for his brother, met with the same fate*. The confidence and the bravery they had inspired the troops with, lasted some time, since the confederate troops became masters of Mestre, Orci, Canneta, and of the city of Brescia. After various other injuries done the enemy, the army encamped near Verona, a principal city of Mastino; and as this place was too well defended to admit any hope of occupying it, the confederates caused races to be run in derision, according to the custom of those times, and repaired to Vicenza. Mastino, seeing himself reduced to a bad plight, having
 1338. lost three of his principal cities, threatened as he was in Verona, and his troops constantly beaten,

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 64. 65. e Istor. Pistol, say Piero was very prudent in war, brave and courteous beyond any other person found in those times, and the most adventurous Chevalier in deeds of arms.

tried every means to enter into an accommodation with his most powerful enemies, the Venetians; who, seeing that hitherto they had drawn no advantage of consequence from an expensive war, Padua having fallen into the hands of the Carrara, and Brescia of the Visconti, accepted the advantageous terms offered them by Mastino: these were the cession of Trevizi, Castel franco*, and Bassano. The other allies of Lombardy also agreed to it, many of whom had gained cities and lands, and all were tired of the expense the war^{1339.} occasioned them. The Florentines alone were discontented. They had entered into an expensive war to gain Lucca, and had obtained only a few castles, which were an appendix to that city. More than 600,000 florins had been spent. The community had contracted many debts with private persons, and pledged the revenues of various duties for several years. Although, therefore, both their anger at the bad faith of the Venetians, and the fear of Mastino, (who by possessing Lucca would have been always dangerous to them) disinclined them to peace; they were obliged to conclude it from imperious circumstances, to prevent the whole weight of the war from falling upon them†.

* So says Villani, but in the History of Cortus, (Rer. Ital. tom. 12.) it is said that the Venetians got Trevisi, and Ubertino Carrara, Bassano and Castelfranco.

† Vill. lib. 11. cap. 76. 81. 89.

CHAPTER III.

PESTILENCE IN FLORENCE.—EMBASSY OF THE ROMANS.—
CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT DISCOVERED.—
WAR WITH PISA.—THE FLORENTINES IN LUCCA.—THE
FLORENTINES ARE DEFEATED BY THE PISANS, WHO LAY
SIEGE TO LUCCA, OF WHICH THEY BECOME MASTERS.—
THE DUKE OF ATHENS, DEFENDER OF FLORENCE, AND
GENERAL OF THE FLORENTINES.—HE IS AFTERWARDS
DECLARED ABSOLUTE MASTER OF FLORENCE FOR LIFE.—
EXTORTIONS AND VIGOROUS EXECUTIONS UNDER HIS
GOVERNMENT.—VICES OF THE DUKE AND HIS COUR-
TIERS.—THE GENERAL INDIGNATION.—HIS CRUELITIES.
—THREE CONSPIRACIES ARE FORMED AT ONE TIME
AGAINST HIM.—ALL RANKS OF CITIZENS RISE AGAINST
THE DUKE AND DRIVE HIM OUT OF FLORENCE, AFTER HE
HAD RENOUNCED THE COMMAND.

A REPUBLIC, like the Florentine, whose strength
depends upon commerce, should take no part in
1339. wars which do not affect it. The conquests she
can make are always more expensive than the revenues
she can derive from them are important, awaken the
jealousy of, and engage her in fresh broils with, the
neighbouring states. At the end of a war which had
been carried on for the acquisition of Lucca, the
republic found herself greatly in debt, without having
been able to obtain it; and the chief source of her
riches, commerce, received a terrible shock in the failure
of the trading firms of Peruzzi and Bardi. These
commercial houses had lent to Edward III., King of
England, an immense sum of money. The king was
involved in a war with France: but, although he was
for the most part conqueror, and had frequently invaded
the French provinces, nevertheless the luxury and the

magnificence of his court, the incalculable expenses of

war, which are burthensome even to conquerors,
^{1339.} placed him in the inability of satisfying his
 creditors; and he was obliged to fail in his contracts
 with these merchants for 1,365,000 florins in gold*.
 Giving money its value in those times, we shall find it
 equivalent to about 7,000,000 of sequins of our own:
 and such a sum being lost by the city of Florence, we
 may easily conceive what injury was done to her
 commerce. She might, indeed, have been given up for
 ruined: these temporary mischiefs, however, are easily
 repaired, when the primary fountains of riches are not
 exhausted or diverted into another channel; and as
 these remained untouched in Florence, they very soon
 filled up the momentary deficiency. But this could not
 have happened at a more unlucky moment, when the
 public who draws its revenue from private individuals,
 was so much in debt. To this evil was added the
^{1340.} dearth of provisions; and what very frequently
 accompanies it, a pestilential fever; whereby if the old
 writers have not exaggerated, no less than 15,000 persons
 died this year within the walls of Florence.

In order somewhat to console the Florentines for these
 calamities, a very respectable embassy arrived from Rome.
 This city, in the absence of the pontiff, had been agitated
 by political convulsions, originating in the discord of the
 great. It having been reported that the Florentines
 had, in a great measure, suppressed their own discords
 by depriving the great of every share in the government,
 Roman ambassadors came to make themselves acquainted
 with the Florentine constitution, and with the means to
 prevent the great disturbing the public tranquillity†.

* Giov. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 87.

† Vill. lib. 11. cap. 115.

But whilst the Romans were coming to learn the manner of living peaceably from the Florentines,
^{1340.} domestic broils were upon the eve of recommencing in Florence. Andrew Bardi, and Bardo Frescobaldi had been very much aggrieved by Jacopo Gabrielli of Gubbio, lately created captain of the guard, and the executor of the despotic orders of those few, who wished for the exclusive government in their own hands, from which both the great and the common people were entirely removed, as well as many of their own order. To these two, smarting under the pains of recent injuries, were united many others from the great who were deprived by law of any share in the government; together with others from the people, who, by an overbearing preponderance, were kept at a distance from it; and a conspiracy was planned to change the government. Their foreign friends, the Pazzi, Tarlati, Guidi, and Ubertini, &c., were to come to Florence, and on the 2d of November, the whole city was to rise, and overturn the constitution. The conspiracy was discovered the day before its execution, by Andrew Bardi; who, either through fear, or remorse, revealed the correspondence to Jacopo Alberti one of the heads of the government. The latter assembling, and there being no time to lose, ordered the public alarm-bell to be rung; and the people throughout the city took up arms against the traitors, whose succours had not yet arrived; hence those who were on the right bank of the Arno did not move: on the other side, too, arms were immediately taken up, and they endeavoured to defend themselves in the street called Bardi. Surrounded on every side by the armed people, they were about coming to blows, when the mayor, Matteo of Ponte, a native of Brescia, a venerable man, interposed; and setting

before the Bardi and Frescobaldi the imminent danger of being slaughtered with their families, persuaded them to lay down their arms, promising them that the conspirators would leave Florence; out of which city ^{1341.} he himself accompanied them in the night*.

Fortune appeared to be playing with the Florentines, by offering to, and taking away from them, at the same time, the city of Lucca, always annoying them, whether they aimed at obtaining it by arms, or by money. Mastino Scala, after the loss of Parma, which had been taken away from him by Azzo Correggio, seeing himself unable any longer to maintain Lucca, offered it to the Florentines for the sum of 250,000 florins in gold: the latter consented; but before it came to their hands, they were obliged to contend with the Pisans, who thought they would no longer be enabled to maintain their liberty, if Lucca belonged to the Florentines†. They would have been better pleased, as they were not able to conquer the Florentines by money, that

^{1341.} Lucca had remained free; various councils were held, in which it was finally determined they should take up arms and contend for the possession of Lucca with the Florentines, and after some fruitless treaty with Mastino, they laid siege to it. They had collected many troops both from the Tuscan Ghibellines, and the lords of Lombardy, particularly from Luchino Visconti, whose friendship they had purchased with treachery.

One of the first Milanese citizens, Francis of ^{1341.} Postierla, had married a near relation of Lucchino, the beautiful and virtuous Margheret Visconti, who had

* Vill. lib. 11. cap. 117. 118. Istor. Pisol.

† It was said that Mastino, upon concluding the treaty with the Florentine deputies had said to them, "*I sell you Lucca, and Pisa I give you.*"—Marang. Chronicles of Pisa.

rejected Lucehino when he fell in love with her. His ill-will being made known to the husband, induced him to frame a conspiracy; upon the discovery of which, Francis fled to Avignon, whence he was attracted by Lucchino to Pisa by the most insidious artifices. In spite of a safe passage, of which the rulers of Pisa had assured him, he was taken, and consigned to Lucchino; who, in order to crown his barbarous brutality, ordered him to be beheaded, together with his beloved and unfortunate consort*. For this act of perfidy the Pisans received powerful assistance from Lucchino, and were enabled to maintain their position in front of the Florentines. The viceroy of Mastino was treating at the same time with the Pisans and putting up Lucca to auction. After various altercations about the payment of the money, the people of the Florentines were finally introduced into Lucca, but two strong places belonging to the Lucchese, the Cerruglio and Monte Chiaro, still remaining in the hands of the Pisans, for which 70,000 florins in gold were deducted. The Pisans, however, would not depart; and remaining immoveable in the plain of Lucca, the Florentines would have shewn their sense to stand upon the defensive, and either by occupying important posts, prevent the transport of provisions to the Pisan army, or harass their country with inroads; but they were ashamed of leaving them quiet; and approach-

1341. ing the enemy, they offered him battle near the Ghiaia, which the Pisans refused not, and they fought with various fortune. The victory inclined at the beginning in favour of the Florentines, and John Visconti, son of Lucchino, was made prisoner; but falling into disorder, in following up the enemy, they were routed and put to

* Corio. Stor. di Mil.

flight by a band which remained in guard of the camp. The archers took a great part in this victory, amongst whom were many Genoese, greatly renowned in this description of arms. The cavalry of the Florentines, so much more numerous than that of the Pisans, was in a great measure disabled for action by this kind of weapon. The loss of the Florentines, in killed and prisoners, was not less than 2000 men*. The Pisans taking courage at this advantage, again surrounded Lucca. It was singular enough to behold the ambassadors of King Ro-

bert appearing at this moment, demanding the
1349. possession of Lucca from the Florentines, as his his own property, telling them that Lucca had been given over to his hands since the year 1313, when it was taken from them by Ugucione Faggiolà. The prompt consent of the Florentines, however, did not occasion less astonishment, who thus lost a city they had so much desired, and had purchased with so much treasure and blood. The same ambassadors, having taken possession, went to Pisa, and intimated to that republic to raise the siege of

a city which belonged to the King of Naples; but
1349. the Pisans, not yielding so easily, proposed rather to send ambassadors to the king. It may be conjectured that the king, as an ancient friend of the Florentines, acted in concert with them to make the Pisans retreat as the latter really suspected. Malatesta had been made general of the Florentines, and marched in order to raise the siege of Lucca; he was however artfully held at bay by the captain of the Pisans, who not having sufficient people to cope with the Florentines, and knowing how greatly Lucca was deficient in provisions, chose to fight

* Gio. Vill. lib. 11. c. 133, 134. Istor. Pisto. Marang. Cron. di Pisa.

by temporizing: The Duke of Athens arrived at the Florentine army with one hundred French horse; and other reinforcements coming up, various operations took place upon the Serchio, where the Pisans, although inferior in number, made a brave defence: Malatesta, superior in force, could never dislodge them, or force them to battle; and, after many attempts to relieve Lucca, he was obliged to retreat. The Lucchese, thus abandoned, were forced to come to terms with the Pisans, which were very moderate; since, (having given time for the Florentines who were in it to retire) they were contented to keep a garrison for fifteen years in the castle of Lucca, called dell' Agosta in Ponte Tetto, and the tower of Montuolo; which was to be paid, however, by the Lucchese; in all other respects they were free*. Thus, after the waste of so much treasure and blood, Lucca, which had been so greatly desired, was held for a moment, and again lost.

These unsuccessful events, had, as usual, excited hatred against the rulers of the Florentine republic. The latter, in order to cover themselves, and distract their enemies' attention and fury elsewhere, elected as
 1349. governor and protector of the city, and its states, Walter, Duke of Athens†, and Count of Brienne, of French extraction, but brought up in Greece and Puglia. Since he had fulfilled the duties of the Duke of Calabria in Florence, this man had acquired great reputation

* See Vill. lib. 10. cap. 129, 130, 131, 132, and the following, and the Pistoiese history.

† He was titular Duke of Athens, educated in Greece, son of another Walter, true Duke of Athens, who was killed fighting against a company of Catalans, formed in Greece, as the companies of Italy were formed. This tyrant of Florence, after various vicissitudes in Puglia and in France, lost his life in the celebrated battle of Poitiers.

for wisdom and justice; and after the expiration of the period of Malatesta's government was elected general and protector, with the most extensive power of administering justice within and without Florence. The duke was a man of vast ambition, and possessed sufficient talent to profit by the circumstances in which the city was placed, divided as it was into three orders of persons, the great, the rich citizens and the common people. The govern-

ment was entirely in the hands of the second: the

1342. other two orders, therefore were necessarily discontented; and adding their old wrongs to the misfortunes which had happened to the republic from the improvident administration of those who governed, their complaints became more frequent and daring: but the most irritated, and, probably, with the most reason, were the great. The people not content with having deprived them of every share in the government, administered not even justice to them: caused the laws to be put in force against them in the severest manner, which were silent for the most part in favour of the class that governed; and thus even in the latter order, persons were not wanting to whom the government became odious, since the most important offices were concentrated in

1343. the hands of a few.

All these discontented persons united themselves with the Duke, urgently beseeching him to make himself absolute master of the city, and promised to support him; thus, preferring the slavery of their native country to a free but aristocratical government, in which they had no share. The duke both supported and fomented this good disposition towards him; and by some acts of vigour, which bore the colour of the most scrupulous justice, he drew upon himself the applauses of the discontented, and struck terror into the people, having brought to justice and made some of

those persons feel the rigour of the laws, who, from being in the number who divided the principal offices amongst themselves, went unpunished, and were consequently odious to the rest. John Medici, among the most powerful, had been captain of Lucca. When arrested, he con-

fessed, under torture, that he had permitted Tarlati to escape from the camp, (although fame reported he was guilty only of bad custody), and his head was taken off. William Altoviti, accused of barter, met with the same fate. Rosso Ricci, and Naldo Rucellai, were also arrested; the former had appropriated to himself the pay of the soldiers; the latter had received money from the Pisans in order to second their interests. The duke did not choose to punish them with death, fearful that too much blood might disgust the people: they were therefore first sentenced to the payment of a sum of money; Ricci to perpetual imprisonment; and Rucellai was banished to the confines of Perugia*. These chastisements in four of the principal families, which had been accustomed to go unpunished, and were odious to the people and the great, drew down great applause upon the duke, who, considering his design already

* Vill. lib. 12. cap. 1. 2. Istor. Pistol. — These few crimes, punished by a vigorous blow of the government, may lead us to conjecture, how many others went unpunished; and how great was the corruption of the government, and why in a commercial republic there was so great an eagerness for the public employments. A certain author of those times writes with great truth of the ill success of the undertakings of the Florentines: “Questo si crede sià stato piuttosto perchè lo popolo, chè l’ ha retta, ha più atteso al guadagno che al bene della repubblica, e vedesi che gran parte dei mercatanti fiorentini per attendere al comune hanno lasciati li fondachi, e le mercanjie.” Istor. Pistol. “This we may believe to have been rather because the people who ruled it, attended more to gain than to the good of the republic, and we see that a great part of the merchants of Florence left their warehouses and their commerce to pay attention to the state.”

mature, for making himself absolute master, and conscious he possessed the power, chose, nevertheless, to ask the government from the Gonfaloniere and the Priors, who denied it him with modest but firm remonstrances.

But the magistracy, knowing the great favour he
 1343. enjoyed from the public, in order not to excite a dangerous tumult, as the people were to assemble the morning following, agreed upon giving him the government for a year, under those limitations, with which King Robert and the Duke of Calabria had formerly enjoyed it. The evening before, the magistracy went with other respectable citizens to the duke, who, in order to gain greater respect for piety and moderation, inhabited the convent of Santa Croce, and after many discussions they feigned to agree to it. The conditions were signed by notaries on both sides, and approved by the oath of the duke*, who came to the palace of the priors on the morning of the 8th of September, accompanied by the greater part of the nobility, by an innumerable concourse of armed people, and by his own troops. The Gonfaloniere made known the deliberations which had been held in the evening: and when it was heard that the signiory of Florence was given to the duke for a

year, many voices from the lower order of people
 1343. cried out *for life (a vita.)* The doors of the palace being opened, he was conducted into it by the nobility, and installed absolute master, sending away the priors and the Gonfaloniere, who, preserving the name only, were removed elsewhere in order to represent a scenic farce. Fireworks were made for joy. The arms of the duke were seen hung up at every corner; at the ringing of all the bells his banners were hoisted

* Gio. Vill. lib. 12. cap. 3.

upon the tower; and the Bishop Acciaiuoli pronounced an homily, wherein he loudly extolled the praises due to the supposed virtues of the duke. All the cities of the republic too surrendered to him*: he became, therefore, master of Florence, not with the limited authority by which the royal family of Naples had more than once held it; but with the absolute power, partly conceded to him, and partly usurped. Right of life and death over persons, distribution of employments, imposition of taxes

or imposts, all was at his will: so much can a momentary delusion effect, when produced by the fury of parties!

Those who were to gain most by the change, were the great so called, who, being hitherto excluded from the employments, and obliged to obey a government of merchants, had now every reason to hope that the duke, to whom their rank brought them nearer than the others, would grant them his favour together with no small share in the government. One of the first acts of the duke was to make peace, and afterwards an alliance with the Pisans, thinking it necessary to confirm his dominion: which very much displeased the Florentines. It is easier to acquire states than to maintain them. The favoured by the change can be few, and these produce endless discontents among those who either expected or thought the same reward due to them. The mind too, which in the execution of the enterprise, has been assiduously vigilant and active, when once it has obtained its end, is accustomed generally to relax, at a time when its vigilance ought to be increased †. The duke thought

* Gio. Vill. lib. 12. cap. 3. c. 4.

† The letter written to the duke by King Robert is worthy of notice, both on account of the truth he tells him, and the counsel he gives him: "Not sense, not virtue, not long friendship, not meritorious

he would be able to preserve, by force, what he had acquired by benevolence; and took into pay many foreign troops at the expense of the republic, an insufficient means against a populous city, which may be badly inclined. He soon neglected the friendship of the great, and began to cultivate that of the common people, extending his favours to the lowest, in order to deserve their powerful support. His courtiers and ministers, almost all foreigners, became, through insolence and extortion, intolerable to the public. His principal confidants were Cerrettieri Visdomini, councillor both in his public affairs, and his private amours; William D' Assisi, captain of the people, (now with the name of conservator, at once his executioner and hangman,) and Harry Fei, who was very clever in the art of squeezing money from the public. His council of state, however, had an air of dignity, being composed of prelates, of the Bishops of Lecce, and Assisi, of Arezzo, Pistoia and Volterra; no other seculars having a seat in it but

services have made thee master of the Florentines, but their great discord, and their serious condition, for which thou art more indebted to them considering the love they bear towards thee, and have thought proper to confide themselves to thy arms. The method that thou hast to pursue, wishing to govern well, is this: That thou keepest well with the people, and governest thyself by their counsel, and not them by thy own; fortify justice and her orders, and as by themselves they governed by seven, act so that by thee, they may govern by ten, that is to say, not rule for thyself, nor divided, but in common. We have heard that thou drawest the rectors from the house of their habitation, that is, of the priors of the palace of the people made for their contentment by the people, put them back again there, and inhabit the palace where is the mayor, where the Duke of Calabria inhabited when he was master of Florence. And if thou dost not this, it does not appear to us that thy safety can extend further, for the space of much time."—Gio. Vill. lib. 12. cap. 4.

Tarlato Tarlati, and Ottavian Belfort ; but from this respectable assembly, laws only emanated which
 1343. were at once as grievous to the public, as they were sanguinary in execution. The cities, subject to the republic, suffered the same treatment ; their mayors thought of nothing else but squeezing money from the citizens to fill the coffers of the duke. It is very probable that such persons sought to enrich themselves too by the same means ; but the duke, when they had grown rich, after the method of the sovereigns of the East, despoiled them of their ill-gained treasures ; and this was the only satisfaction they gave the oppressed public*. Principal persons were put to death upon trivial pretences ; others were fined heavily in money † ; to this were added the insolence and dissoluteness of the duke, and his dependants towards the most honest women ; amongst whom they endeavoured to introduce the libertine customs and manners of the French and Neapolitan courts, and substitute them in place of the modest and decent attributes of the republican Florentines. Not only common dissoluteness degraded his courtiers, but even vices which nature abhors ‡. The seed of discontent was sown in all orders of persons : in the great, besides the motives we have adduced, for not being admitted to the government, as they had expected ; in the people for having lost it ; in all orders on account of the increased impositions, so that three months had hardly elapsed before the government of the duke became detested with more vehemence than it had been before desired.

It was not difficult for the duke to perceive the change, and the increasing hatred of the public against him ; but his manner of acting in these circumstances

* Istor. Pistol. † Gioz. Vill. lib. 12. c. 8. ‡ Istor. Pistol.

was not very judicious. It was natural to imagine, that, in a new principality, some conspiracy might be planned against him; but he thought of gaining

^{1343.} to himself the public affection by an air of confidence and extraordinary security, which he carried so far as not only to despise, but even to punish as calumniators, whoever ventured to give him salutary advice. Matthew of Marozzo for having warned him that the family of the Medici were conspiring to kill him, was, by an act of cruelty at once useless and imprudent, flayed and hanged; this terrible example, however, did not deter others; so great is the hope and courage of informers. Lambert Abati followed Matthew in giving information and receiving punishment: for having disclosed to him that some noble Florentines were conspiring for his death, and that they held a council with John Riccio, a captain of Mastino, he received the reward due to the trade of an informer. This cruel severity, without gaining him the good disposition of the Florentines, was adapted only to invite the discontented to conspire against him more openly. The duke,

^{1343.} however, with an unexampled frivolity, appears to have cared more for words than actions; since, upon it being reported to him that Bettone of Cino, who had been already promoted by him, spoke ill of his government, he caused his tongue to be plucked out, to be stuck upon a lance, and the unfortunate Bettone to be dragged close to it upon a car through the city. He banished him afterwards to Romagna, where he died from the consequences of the wound*.

Words cannot express how much, in an eloquent city, eager to examine and judge of public affairs, such a punishment at once disheartened and imbittered the citizens against him, who thus saw even the liberty

* Giov. Vill. lib. 12. c. 8.

of speech denied them. All orders of the state were roused against the duke ; three conspiracies were formed against him at the same time ; and not one had any knowledge of the other. The Bishop of Florence himself (Acciajoli) was the head of the first ; he had loaded the duke with excessive praises at his first installation, and was now ashamed of it. As the three conspiracies did not communicate with each other, the projects to get rid of the duke were various, none of which could be carried into execution ; because, as suspicions increased, he had vigilantly put himself upon guard, although the conspirators for a considerable time remained concealed. Francis Brunelleschi, one of the adherents of the duke, received a hint of the conspiracy of the Medici from a Siennese who came there ; but who could only name Paul Marzocca, a Florentine citizen, and Simone, of Monterappoli. These were arrested, and, being tormented, revealed the names of the conspirators, of whom Anthony Adimari was the ringleader, a man of great reputation, both for the qualities with which he was endowed and the greatness of his

^{1343.} family. When summoned he appeared, and was detained ; but the duke dared not to put him to death. Frightened at the great number and the respectability of the conspirators, and not thinking he possessed a force sufficient to act against them, he sent for aid from various parts of Tuscany, and to the Lord of Bologna ; a part of which arriving, he caused three hundred of the principal citizens to be summoned, many of whom were of the conspirators, under the pretext of wishing to consult with them, as he was sometimes wont to do. It was his intention to arrest them, put part of them to death, and keep the remainder in prison,—and by this execution to terrify the rest of the city, scour it with his armed

people, and establish more firmly his dominion. The summons being made known, and as many being found^{1343.} in the list, that it appeared clearly a list of proscribed, the number gave courage to each; in a short time the three conspiracies were united into one,—and they determined, instead of offering their head to the tyrant, to attack him courageously. The morning of St. Ann being arrived, which was destined for the enterprise, contentions between the people were purposely kindled, who coming to blows, all of a sudden the people appeared in arms; the streets were barricaded; the nobility and the people, forgetting their ancient contentions, embraced each other, and united in sustaining the common cause. The foreign soldiers of the duke, at the news of the rebellion, marched to his assistance; many could not arrive at the palace, and were either killed or made prisoners. Some, however, came up, and joined the guard, which was accustomed to remain there. A few of the nobles, who had remained faithful to him, and a part of the lowest order of people whom he had endeavoured to gain over, came to him; but these, seeing that the greater part of the city was in open rebellion against him, abandoned him. The priors, who had incautiously retired to the palace for safety at the beginning of the tumult, were retained as hostages by the duke. The soldiers, part foot and part horse, who were in the square in his defence, were very soon beaten by the infuriated mob, and, dismounting, retired for safety within the palace. All the streets that led to it were blockaded by the people; and no hope of succour, nor other defence remained, to the duke but the walls. These were very strong, and sufficiently provided with people; provisions, however, were wanting. He remained there besieged until the 3rd of August. In the mean time,

having assembled the people in Santa Reparata, he gave power to the bishop, united with fourteen citizens, to reform the government. All the agents of the duke, who came into the hands of the people, were cruelly murdered and torn to pieces. This fate attended a notary of the protector, (Simone Norcia,) Arrigo Fei, who was discovered in the act of escape, disguised as a friar, and another Neapolitan. The people were not contented with a simple death, but murdered them publicly in the most cruel manner.

The duke, in the mean time, found himself pinched by hunger in the palace, and seeing himself reduced to a bad condition, sought for an accommodation. The Siennese ambassadors had joined the Florentines with opportune aid. These, together with the bishop, and with Count Simone, treated with the people, who, however, obstinately refused every accommodation, unless William of Assisi, protector, with his son, and Cerettieri Visdomini, were first given over to them. The duke refused; but the French soldiers, who were shut up there, protested they would not perish by hunger or by the sword for three persons they would not even have saved, and in the same evening threw the son of the Conservatore out at the gate. He was a youth of fine aspect, of eighteen years of age, and had no other crime but that of being son of an odious man. This was sufficient for the mob to make a sacrifice of him: he was stabbed by a thousand cuts, and even torn to pieces by the teeth. The same slaughter was made of the father, who had been spectator of the execution of his son. Being demanded by loud shouts, and driven out from the palace, he was cut in pieces; carried in triumph through the city, and his blood and flesh tasted with a savage eagerness. It is strange to see how the people, united, can commit such atrocious

actions, which any individual, taken abstractedly, could not be capable of; it would appear that the passions become multiplied in proportion as the number of the mob increases; and that, thinking to do themselves justice, an emulation in cruelty arises, which makes every one vie with another in excesses of barbarity. This brutal occupation was the cause of the safety of Visdomini, who, being forgotten in that moment, was enabled to escape in the night. After so many cruelties, the people began to attend to treaties of accommodation. The duke gave full power to enter into them by means of the Bishop of Lecce, to fourteen elect, and to the Bishop Acciajoli. By this treaty he solemnly renounced, on the 3rd of August, before the Siennese ambassadors and Count Simone, the government of Florence, and the other cities of the republic; and in token of renunciation laid down his mace before witnesses. He departed on the 6th of August, accompanied by the count, who ordered him on the confines to confirm his abdication. He at first refused; but, upon being threatened with being taken back to Florence, he was induced to ratify it. He left behind him an atrocious and infamous memory; nor is any other praise due to his government, but for the care he gave himself to unite the minds of many citizens who were alienated from each other by an inveterate and hereditary hatred*.

* See Vill. lib. 12. cap. 8. 15, 16. Istor. Pistol.

ESSAY II.

UPON THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

IN every part of the earth mankind have been disposed to the culture of sciences, arts, and literature. Certain countries, however, are better adapted to unfold their seeds, and produce a more vigorous vegetation. Particular plants flourish in particular climates; and either take not root, or thrive badly out of them. If experience proves to us, that after the repeated tempests, which at various times have changed the face of the earth into a desert, there is any part of it, in which spontaneous vegetation has quickly shot forth again fresh and vigorous, whilst other parts have remained barren, (even sometimes notwithstanding the greatest labour of the cultivator), we must necessarily allow that particular soil to be favoured by nature, and to have received from her a singular fertility. This has happened exactly with Italy when placed in comparison with other nations with respect to sciences, arts, and the belles lettres. Leaving out of the question the oriental nations, which were certainly the mothers of the first light, which has since diffused so much splendour over the west: their history being enveloped in uncertain traditions, and fabulous conjectures, we cannot with safety decide whether that light was a twilight, or a sun which now shines resplendent over Europe*. Be

* Opinions are various; to prove their great uncertainty, it will be sufficient to quote two of the greatest men of our age, De Bailly and De la Place. The former thinks that in the times of, which no trace

that as it may, whether we regard the ancient or the modern nations in their most favourable hypothesis, we shall perceive that they exhibit to us one single illustrious epoch, one golden age alone, in which arts, sciences, and letters, have flourished. Greece boasts of one of the most luminous epochs; viz., the age of Pericles and Alexander; an age, of which it has been ingeniously said, that whilst Demosthenes and Æschines could excite and appease the popular passions at their option, by the magic of their eloquence, the mind at the same time could be relaxed at the theatre, with the tender productions of Euripides and Sophocles; elevated by the sublime verses which celebrated the conquerors of Elis; or the eye could be agreeably employed upon the canvass of Apelles, the marble of Phidias, or the bronze of Lisippus. After this great epoch, various political vicissitudes have plunged that country, once so dear to the muses, into the ignorance and barbarity in which it remains still buried.

Italy boasts of three of these luminous epochs; the first anterior to the Greek, when arts and letters flourished in ancient Tuscany, as we have already shewn in its proper place*; the second, the age of Augustus; and the third belongs also to Tuscany, when the restoration of letters and arts, after a long barbarity, not only rendered Florence a new Athens, but the light which was kindled there, has been diffused over the rest of Europe, which portion of the globe is thus obliged to acknowledge that her first mistress was born on the banks of the Arno. These three epochs, which

exists in history, sciences, and particularly astronomy, have been cultivated with the same delicacy and precision that they are at present: the second is of a contrary opinion.—Consult Bailly, *Histoire de l'Astronomie*, and la Place *Exposition du Système du Monde*.

* Lib. 1. cap. 2.

no other people can boast of, are the most certain proofs of the natural fertility of the Italian genius. The age of Augustus, however, must be regarded as inferior to that of Pericles: although Rome, obliged to acknowledge Greece as her mother * and mistress, may have rivalled her in letters and in philosophy; although the eloquence of Tully, for the greatness of the objects upon which he employed himself, appeared to many to exceed that of the Greek orators †; although the beautiful and limpid imagination of Virgil, guided always by reason, might by its prudent regularity sometimes compensate for the want of force and sublime images, with which the Greek epic poet abounds; notwithstanding the golden philosophical writings of Cicero, in which we meet with precise reason, adorned with simple ornaments, whilst in Plato, they are frequently deformed by an unintelligible sophistry; nevertheless, if the advantages and disadvantages are well balanced, the mother and the daughter may be considered equal: but the daughter is altogether inferior in the fine arts. This glory was disdained by the Romans, who abandoned it to the Greek artists, who flocked in such crowds to the capital of the world ‡. The fine statues and pictures which

* *Græcia capta ferum victorem cæpit et Artes
Intulit agresti Latio, &c.—Hor. Ep. ad Aug.*

† The question of primacy is not easily to be determined. Petrarch has decided it in favour of Cicero, but it may be opposed that he was ignorant of the Greek.—*Trionfo della Fama*, c. 3.

*Questi è quel Marco Tullio in cui si mostra
Chiaro quanti ha eloquenza frutti e fiori
Questi son gli occhii della lingua nostra;
Dopo venia Demostene, che fuori
E di speranza omai del primo loco
Non ben contento de secondi onori.*

‡ *Excudent alii spirantia mollius aëra
Credo equidem vivos ducent de marmore vultus.*

As far as this, Virgil is correct, but his adulation of Augustus and the

adorned the rooms of the opulent Romans, were of Greek workmanship. But if the Roman citizens disdained the chisel and the pencil, the esteem in which they held the works of the great artists, and the premiums and encouragement which were given them in Rome, produced the same effect as if they had cultivated the fine arts with their own hand. The Roman palaces were so profusely adorned with statues, that, after the many dilapidations to which either barbarism or superstition condemned them; after so much rapine, either in the times of Constantine, or subsequently, Rome, nevertheless, still abounds with them to a degree as even to excite the wonder of strangers.

The golden age of Augustus began to be deteriorated according to custom by the constant mixture of an alloy generally inferior, and gold may be said to have been converted into silver, into brass, and even into viler metal. It is the fate of human affairs, physical as well as moral, to have a period of infancy, of youth, of virility, and of old age, from which even the fine arts and letters are not exempted: there is the highest summit in the beautiful, and certain limits which cannot be passed without declining to decay*. Historical observation, so often repeated, clearly evinces, that the impatient imagination cannot be maintained in one point, and disdaining to appear the imitator of those models, which are arrived at the height of the beautiful, it loves to beat new roads, even should it depart from perfection. Maro, therefore, Horace, Tully, and Cæsar,

reigning family, in whose presence the name of the last prop of liberty could not be mentioned, or at least hearkened to with pleasure, has made him add:

Orabunt melius causas.—*Virg. Æn.* lib. 6.

* . . . Summisque negatum

Stare diu.—*LUCAN. Phars.* lib. 1

must necessarily have been succeeded by Lucan, Statius, Seneca, and Pliny. As, however, in physical bodies, old age is accelerated by disease, so the natural decay of the arts in the Roman provinces was hastened by political causes. The repeated invasions of the barbarians, carrying desolation into those countries once so happy, banished the tranquillity so necessary for genius. When the barbarians became subsequently masters of them, incapable as they were of appreciating letters and arts, on the contrary considering them unworthy of a warrior, and adapted only to weaken courage, they must necessarily have wholly extinguished them. Such were, for many ages, the rulers of Italy; and Goths, Lombards, and Franks, resembled each other in their contempt of learning. In this general shipwreck, the ecclesiastics alone preserved that little literature which remained to Italy. Respected even by the barbarians, and obliged to explain the dogmas of the gospel, in order to defend them from innovators, they were under the necessity of informing themselves; and sacred learning was preserved indeed by some holy fathers of the obscure ages, but void, for the most part, of every ornament of style. Besides the neglect, many too are accused of having contributed alike with the barbarians, to the extinction of arts and letters; despising them as of pagan origin, and destroying the statues as idols or portraits of the profane heroes of heathenism. From this accusation one of the greatest pontiffs, Gregory the Great, has not been exempted. It is asserted that although he was most learned himself in sacred studies, he despised letters, and burnt the writings of the ancient classics, and ordered the statues to be either broken or precipitated into the Tyber. Although such an action may be denied by his defenders in our times, when this persecution is considered a bar-

barism, in a more remote age it was not only positively asserted by very holy men; but regarded as a meritorious work, and the impartial reader, after having examined the documents, will find foundation rather to believe than to reject it*. From so many causes, so long continued, barbarism continually increasing in Italy, she became reduced in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh ages to the most gloomy ignorance; and without repeating

* There exists, not in fact, any document of this rage of Gregory against the arts and sciences, until more than five centuries after his age. The testimonies, however, are positive and respectable, such as Giovanni di Sarisberi, Frate Leone d' Orvieto, and others; who either adduce documents from memorials now lost, or wrote that which the general and uninterrupted tradition had taught them. A traditional opinion, which has passed through so many mouths, and has been continued without contradiction for so long a time, acquires very great authority. In order to make it agreeable to us, however, it is necessary to examine rigorously whether the writers have some personal motive, or of party, to affirm or deny it: Gio. Sarisberi, and Friar Leone are not the detractors of Gregory; on the contrary, they venerate him as a saint, and the second praises him highly for having ruined the statues of the Pagans: then it is that the assertion begins to acquire strength. If among the assertors of the enmity Gregory bore towards the classics holy men are found, upon whom no suspicion of animosity falls, as S. Antonine who quotes Cardinal Giovanni of Domenico, if in an Edict of Louis II, King of France, giving infinite praise to Gregory the same is asserted as by St. Antonine, that he endeavoured to suppress the works of Cicero; if in the writings of this pontiff, expressions are met with which show his contempt of letters (see the letter of Gregory to S. Leonardo upon the morality of Job), we must give some weight to ancient tradition; at least, from these documents, the wise and unprejudiced reader will draw that opinion, which common sense dictates to him: In this examination I do not find the wonted criticism of Tiraboschi, who pretends to weaken the assertion of Giovanni upon this article, because he has thought Pope Gregory by his prayers had liberated the soul of the Emperor Trajan from hell. The credulity of a pious person at a strange miracle does not render his assertion of a natural event suspicious.

what we have more diffusely explained in its place*, in order to know what strange revolution had taken place in taste, we have only to compare the verses of Virgil with those of Donizone; the Histories of Tacitus and Sallust, with the superstitious legends of this age; and the Gothic fabricks and ugly statues with the Pantheon, the Apollo of Belvidere, and with the Venus of Medicis. But there is a summit in good as well as in evil, and in the course of human affairs we must from the former advance to better. The germ of arts and sciences remained idle and uncultivated in the libraries, and in the bosom of the Italians: and like after a winter or a tempest, which have destroyed whole families of insects, their fruitful embryos remain in the soil, waiting for the warmth of spring to give them birth; so the latter wait only opportune circumstances to unfold them.

Various were the causes, that, after this epoch, awakened the fine studies. First: The change of government in the Italian cities: Mankind having emerged from the cruel oppression and debasement, in which they had groaned under the feudal government, having re-assumed their energy of mind, began freely to exercise it upon other objects, and in contending with arms and genius against their oppressors, an unusual physical, as well as a moral, force was brought into action in these political shocks, and knowledge flashed like sparks from the violent blows given to solid bodies.—Secondly: The Italian cities became commercial: commerce supposes travel and communication with distant countries, and consequently the acquisition of fresh knowledge: History shows us in like circumstances that commercial people are better informed than others, and

* Lib. 2. cap. 4.

the Phenicians and Egyptians have been proved to be learned and civilized, whilst the Greeks were barbarians.—Thirdly: The Crusades, so pernicious on one side to the human race, and which have cost Europe 6,000,000 of inhabitants, were, on the other, useful in bringing knowledge into the West. The sacred warriors passed from Constantinople, and sometimes made a long stay there: the languid remains of the ancient Greek literature still existed in that city, transmitted, as it were, by hereditary succession to degenerate posterity; an inheritance, indeed, exceedingly diminished, but very superior to all that could be found in the rest of Europe, and which contained golden and precious funds. Those who returned to Italy became more civilized; and the citizens of Pisa, Genoa, and Venice, who had so large a share in it, brought back to their country both knowledge and riches.—Fourthly: Books became more common by the invention of paper, which was formed at first of cotton, and afterwards of rags of linen. The codes in papyrus and in parchment, once rare, and of a very high price, were multiplied by this means*: Genius had access to the fountains of knowledge, and knowledge universally increased. To these causes, that awakened genius, it is necessary to add the subsequent favour of princes; who, by encouraging the cultivators of letters, stimulated them to the honourable career. Various pontiffs merit this praise; and among them Urban IV., who, as a lover of philosophers, honoured and rewarded whoever, in that age, merited the name. But above all, the sovereigns of Sicily, Frederic II and Manfredi, were celebrated, who, equally distinguished as they were in learning with the most learned of their time, protected

* Murat. Diss. 43.

every kind of science and literature. The Italian genius, therefore, roused from ignorance, had begun to make use of its own strength. Colleges were opened in various Italian cities; some of which afterwards brought to maturity, and raised to the dignity of privileged universities, attracted a crowd of natives and foreigners: who, if they did not derive the purity of doctrine from these fountains, were at least excited to a career, which was afterwards destined to bring them back to the golden and classic models.

LAW.

THE art which governs mankind, which holds the balance of Themis, was the first and most cultivated in these rising colleges. As long as Italy was subject to the Lombard kings, their legal code, compiled by Rotari and succeeding rulers, regulated judgments. That part of Italy, not subject to them, used the Roman laws, however corrupted. Sometimes even the Lombard kings and the emperors permitted some cities to make use of whatever legislation most pleased them; for the most part, however, neither the one or the other, but the arbitrary will of the count or marquis, decided the quarrels, and the confusion in legal science must have been very great: consequently, the Italian people, when once set at liberty, found that the principal, and most necessary, faculty they ought to cultivate, was law. Bologna was the first to distinguish herself above the other Italian cities for her university. Nearly 10,000 scholars, for the most part foreigners of every nation, and many of them very illustrious, frequented it. Amongst the latter were Thomas Becket, afterwards the celebrated Archbishop of Canterbury, and St. Peter Belesense, &c. It

was highly honoured by the Pontiff, Alexander III, who had been professor of sacred scripture in it; and when he arrived at that exalted situation, he gave, in a letter of his own hand-writing, a formal intimation, to the body of professors, of his election. A medal, coined in those times, on which Bologna is called *Mater Studiorum*, confirms the venerable antiquity of her college*.

Leaving Bologna and many other universities of Italy, and turning our attention towards our own Tuscany, we find the existence of the university of Pisa at very early times, although not of that antiquity which some have chosen to give it. The letter of the Marsilian monk to his abbot, from which it has been thought proper to infer that, in the middle of the eleventh century, a celebrated university flourished in Pisa†, is not a sufficient document to establish it; since the date of the letter must be deferred more than a century, as Father Corsini has proved with incontrovertible documents in the History of the University‡ he began, wherein he transfers its origin to the middle of the following century. Without entering into a dispute upon words, it is certain that, in the thirteenth century, there existed a college composed of lawyers, and one of arts, in Pisa, which proves the same. Similar colleges, too, existed at the same time in Arezzo, Sienna, and Pistoia§. But if the universities of Tuscany, both

* Sarti e Fattorini, de Claris, &c.

† Large epistles of Pandec. Cav. Flamm. dal Borgo. Dissertation upon the Origin of the University of Pisa.

‡ Fabbr. Hist. Univer. Pis.

§ From a passage of Roffredo of Benevento, it is inferred that in the year 1215 a school existed in Arezzo: "Cum essem Aretii, ibique in cathedra residerem post transmigrationem Bononiæ ego Roffredus Beneventanus juris civilis professor, Anno Dom. 1215. Mens Octo-

for the number of their scholars and professors; yielded in celebrity to that of Bologna,—legal science, so much cultivated in the latter city, was indebted to Pisa for a considerable improvement in the discovery of the pandects, a short history of which will probably not be unwelcome to those of our readers who are not initiated in legal studies. From the simple and rude Roman legislation of the celebrated twelve tables, falsely attributed to the wise men of Greece*, down to the times of the Emperor Justinian, the Roman laws had been swelled to an immense medley, being amalgamated strangely together with heterogeneous elements; the modest republican laws with the more imperious of the Cæsars. The interpretations of the lawyers contributed not less to the abundance of volumes, and their subtilities increased the contradictions which must naturally have been met with in so tedious and almost innumerable a series of laws.

bris Proem in Quest." The school must have been respectable, since a professor had passed in it for the most celebrated university of that age. Cavalier Guazzesi has also published its statutes. V. t. 2 of his works.

* That the deputies of Rome visited Greece in the times of Pericles to learn the science of legislation, and that the laws of Solon were transfused into the twelve tables, has been believed by Livy and Dionysius: they were, however, very remote from the time, in which the fact is supposed to have happened. This has the air of fable, when we consider the silence of all the Greek writers of that age, who would not have omitted so brilliant an opportunity of doing honour to their country; nor is it credible that the Roman patricians would have undertaken a long and dangerous navigation to copy a model of the most rigorous democracy.—Gibbon, *History of Decline, &c.* cap. 44. The Roman laws, however, may be called of Greek origin, since an exile of Ephesus, Hermodorus, arriving in Latium with the lights of Greek philosophy, communicated his knowledge to the legislators of Rome, and a statue was erected to him in Rome to perpetuate his memory. The exile of Hermodorus is mentioned by Cicero (*Tusculane*), and the statue of Pliny, lib. xxxiv.

In the sixth age of the christian era, in the decline of sciences, Justinian, far from the country for which those laws had been particularly enacted, in a language foreign to Greece, conceived their compilation and reform; an undertaking for which the genius and extensive views of Cæsar, united with the fecundity of Cicero, and the acuteness of Scaevola, would not have been too much. Ten of the most learned lawyers, at the head of whom was Tribonianus, were charged with compiling the laws which were scattered in the three codes, Hermogenian, Gregorian, and Theodosian; and to make whatever changes in them they thought most convenient. This compilation was called the *code*. Other seventeen lawyers, with Tribonianus himself at their head, were intrusted with collecting the chosen opinions, and the decisions of the most illustrious jurisprudents; and these, united and digested into fifty books, were called *pandects* or *digestions*. Finally, Tribonianus, Theophilus, and Doroteus, compiled the institutions; and the new constructions that subsequently took place were called *novelle*. It is asserted that the pandects, having disappeared in the universal wreck of sciences and letters, were dug out of the ground by the Pisans in the year 1135, (as we have already said*,) in the sacking of Amalfi, and that at a period of so much ignorance, there still existed discernment enough to make them prize, and carry to their country, that precious code as a respectable trophy. We have neither time nor space to enter again into a dispute which has arisen between two celebrated professors of that university,—a mathematician, who carried the light and precision of his art into a science not his own,—and a lawyer, who has merited all the confidence of a great

* Lib. iii. cap. 2.

sovereign, and for so many years has governed a great kingdom. We will draw a veil over the animosities which attended this dispute, and bear in remembrance only that their controversies have enriched law with fresh knowledge, and illustrated the history of that respectable city.

After so much light and abundance of learning diffused over the question by disputants*, we cannot do less than submit a few reflections to our readers. The arguments against the discovery of the pandects in Amalfi are all negative,—that is, drawn from the silence of cotemporary writers, who described the expedition. The Pisan Chronicle, which makes mention of it, may be considered about a century later, and of more remote time, too, the *dark* poem of Friar Ranieri dei Granchi†. Leaving aside the disputed chronicle of the house of Griffi, the donation of the pandects made solemnly by Lotharius to the Pisans, with all the other circumstances, invented probably subsequently in order to give a nobility to that acquisition, we will alone consult our good sense in this disparity of opinions. If we take from the detail the pompous circumstances with which it has been wished to embellish it, and which would not have been passed over in silence by coeval historians, nothing is more natural than their silence upon a book, brought to Pisa with other booty, and which had remained perhaps for some time without its due merit being known. On the other hand, it is certain that the Pisans possessed the precious manuscript shortly after that time; they either brought it, therefore, from Amalfi, or held it from time imme-

* See the various writings of Grandi, Tanucci, Anthony D'Esti, of the use and authority of civil reason; and particularly Brekman's History of the Pandects.

† Murat. Rer. Ital. 5. v. 11.

morial,—and only made it known in the rise of legal studies. But if we wish to give greater glory to the Pisans for the possession of a respectable manuscript, is it not more honourable for them to have possessed it before the sacking of Amalfi? They had, therefore, no motive to invent a fable; and it is very probable that the anonymous chronicle, and Ranieri Granchi, contained and wrote only the simple and pure tradition; hence the ancient history is rendered very probable, in spite of all contradiction,—and the fact might also have happened, as the warm fancy of Brenkman has suggested*. Thus it cannot be maintained, that legal science, shut up in the pandects, was unknown to Italy before that age. Amongst the other documents is that of Irnerio, who, since the year 1102, expounded it in the university of Bologna†; it appears, therefore, that some other copy, either entire or defective, had already existed. But, upon the discovery of the Pisan, all eyes were turned towards it; it was looked upon with singular reverence, and there is good reason to believe that subsequently all the others have been derived from it‡. The excessive veneration, and almost apotheosis, which made Poliziano think or wish to persuade others, that that copy was written by the hand of Tribonianus himself, raised against the book the detractors of that great literato who sought its defects with a microscopic criticism; but, although the exaggerated opinion of Poliziano may not be true, the generality of learned lawyers honoured it; as superior

* Hist. Pandect. lib. i. c. 8.

† Grandi, de Pandect.

‡ All the manuscripts repeat the errors of the copier, existing in the Pisan Pandects; and the same transposition of certain papers is found in them.—Brenk. Hist. Pandect. Therefore it may be asserted that the Pisan is the father of all the others.

to every other, by the most superlative praise*. The Florentine republic, in the conquest of Pisa, considered it a trophy worthy of her victory. In times when the authority of ancient jurists had much weight, a proportional esteem of the public corresponded to it. The respectable manuscript was visited by long peregrinations of the learned from Germany, and was shewn in a royal palace preserved in precious envelopes†. Nor was so respectable a dépôt of legal science alone confined to Pisa; but the university of Bologna, which was the most celebrated, received professors from it, who conferred upon their city no little lustre. After the ingenious reflection and learned information afforded by the Chevalier Cosi in his eulogium of Bulgaro‡, it appears that we may assert that learned lawyer, who did so much honour to the university of Bologna, to have been a Pisan. For his eloquence he was called *bocca d'oro* (golden mouth); more estimable too for the ingenious frankness with which, when interrogated upon the imperial prerogatives, he spoke the language of truth to a powerful sovereign, and one so jealous of it; viz., the Emperor Frederic I. Nevertheless he was much honoured by him; and still more by the testimony of the public after his death, who, in order to render his memory at once immortal, and to remind the pretor of the sublime duties of his employment, chose the latter should expound in the house of Bulgaro, thus converting it into the Temple of Themis, and subsequently ordering the university to be built upon it as the ancient habita-

* See Brenkm. *Judicia de Pand.* Florent.

† It was shewn in the Palace Pitti, and is now in the Laurentian Library.

‡ Memor. Ist. of the illustrious Pisans.

tion of the sciences*. Legal science and that celebrated university continued to receive new lustre from the Tuscan professors; but few arrived in this time at the glory of Accursio. Born in a village called Bagnolo in 1182, he illumined the dark chaos of legal science. The comments or interpretations of the laws had strangely increased, and their contradictions and obscurity became more frequent. Accursio endeavoured to bring the thread of Ariadne into this intricate labyrinth. Having confronted all the comments, he chose the best, and added to them his own. He had the pleasure, which has not been given to any legislator, of seeing his legal science followed by men without obligation. His work was not only received with universal applause, but, where the laws were silent, the judges willingly submitted themselves to the opinion of this great lawyer†, who, without other authority than that which reason affords, continued to regulate jurisdiction for nearly three centuries; and has yielded only to Alciato and other lawyers, whom increasing knowledge had rendered more learned and more refined, and who, by making more erudite, but perhaps not more just, interpretations, have wonderfully increased those volumes‡. After a father so illustrious, his three sons, Francis, Cervotto, and William, learned as they were in the same science, scarcely deserve to be mentioned. Francis, however, the elder, professor in the same university, in great part heir of the paternal celebrity, knew how to defend it

* De clar. archigimn. Bononien. Profess. p. 1.

† Ibid.

‡ Upon these interpreters and voluminous interpretations the French satirist Boileau has diffused his comic salt (*Lutrin*, chant 5) describing the battle made with books:

Alors il se saisit d'un large Infertiat,
Grossi de visions d'Accurse et d'Alicat.

with filial duty from the attacks of another illustrious professor, Odofred, upon whose death he remained without opposition the first in legal science*. He was highly honoured by a ferocious King of England, enemy of the Muses, and exterminator of poets, Edward I., whose counsellor he was for eight years†, and who had the misfortune, together with Prisciano, Brunetto Latini, and other learned men, to be placed in hell by Dante, for a vice which nature abhors, and modesty dares not to name‡. Benincasa, of Arezzo, or of Laterina, received a better treatment from this poet by being placed in purgatory. A renowned commentator of the laws, afterwards judge in Sienna, met with an untimely end by the hands of a celebrated assassin of those times, Ghino di Tacco§, whose brother he had condemned to death. Dino of Mugello, in the year 1284, added new

* De claris. Archiv., &c.

† Edward I. had got acquainted with Francis in his travels in Italy. This king, after the conquest of the province of Wales, ordered that all the poets of that country should be put to death, because, by their martial songs, they excited the people to arms and rebellion.—See the sublime Ode of Gray; and the Poetical Curses given to that king.

‡ Dante, Inf. cant. 15.

§ Quivi era l' Aretin, che dalle braccia

Fiere di Ghin di Tacco ebbe la morte

E l' altro che annegò correndo a caccia.—Purg, Canto vi.

The audacity of this assassin, and the weakness of the public force, are alike manifest in this event. Benincasa had gone from Sienna to Rome to exercise the office of auditor or senator. Ghino, with his bul-lies, assailed him whilst he was sitting in the tribunal amongst a very great crowd, and, having slain him, threw him on the ground from the stairs, and departed without any one opposing him; others adding, that he cut off his head, and, fixing it upon a pike, traversed Rome with it.—See Crist. Landino. Com. of Dante Benvenuto, of Imola, and Girolamo Gigli, with Mauri, Istor. of the Decamerone.

lustre to the jurisprudence of Accursio, since the Veronese made a decree, that wherever the authority of the laws or the comment of Accursio were deficient, the opinion of Dino should be followed. He distinguished himself in sacred and profane jurisprudence. Being called to Rome by Boniface VIII. to regulate the decretals, he flattered himself with obtaining the purple; but, being deluded, he returned to his literary repose in Bologna. Another celebrated Tuscan, Cino of Pistoia, was the pupil of Accursio and Dino, and was professor either in Bologna or in Perugia*. Whoever wishes to add to his praise as a lawyer may adduce one of his scholars, who acquired great reputation; that is, Bartolo: together with his voluminous comments upon the code of Justinian; but these, as well as many learned labours of his masters and scholars, have fallen into oblivion; and the fame of Cino as a refined poet only remains, authenticated by some few productions, and the esteem and friendship, which he enjoyed, of Petrarch.

Ecclesiastical legislature too acquired a new form and order about this time from a Tuscan. This was Graziano, a native of Chiusi, and monk of Santa Felice in Bologna. Before him, other collectors existed; among the rest a man had acquired an infamous celebrity, who, under the name of Isidoro Mercatore or Peccatore, in the middle of the ninth century, scattered the false decretals attributed to Benedict Levite of the church of Maynz: Bonchard, Bishop of Worms, and Ivone of Chartres, had also preceded him with better reputation, but Graziano surpassed them all. He reduced sacred jurisprudence into a better form, and brought the canonical

* See Documents of Cino of the Professor Ciampi already published.

rights into a regular form, he either explained the obscurity of some canons, or attempted to reconcile their contradictions. His work was known to the public, probably in the year 1140, and for a long time was regarded as classic. His author was one of the most learned men of those times, according to the testimony even of persons who are not used to give great praise to that age, and to such kind of writers*. Nevertheless he is reproached with many faults: he has considered the false decretals as authentic, and made use of them, and is accused of having altered the writings of S. Leo, S. Gregory, and other fathers, adding to or taking from them, in order to adapt their sentiments to that apocryphal doctrine: he is said to have abused also the confidence reposed in him by mutilating the canons, or the laws, in order to sustain the pretensions of the ecclesiastical judges. These crimes being proved against him he deserves great reproach, and not merely for his failing in criticism, which was the fault of the barbarism of his times. It is pretended too that Graziano paid no respect to auricular confession, and maintained that the confession made to God with the heart was sufficient; but an illustrious Pisan, who was highly distinguished in the canonical study, and in that of letters; who, when professor in Bologna, had the honour to number among his scholars, Innocent III., Uguccione or Ugo, Bishop of Ferrara, has justified Graziano†. The fame of this canonist continued to blaze down to the sixteenth century with a torch inconvenient to the eyes of Luther, who did him the honour of ordering his work to be publicly burnt. Another Tuscan of Pontormo, Cardinal Laborante, some years afterwards‡ made

* Enciclop. artic. Decret. † De clario Archig. Bonon. Prof. p. 1.

‡ Ann. 1182.

a new compilation*. But these and others soon sunk into oblivion, when confronted with those of Graziano. If persons, who acquired a celebrity in this age, without any testimony of their merit, deserve to be mentioned in the history of letters, Grazie, the Aretine, must not be passed over in silence; who was called, on account of his learning, Master of the Decretals, was honoured with important commissions from two pontiffs, elected Patriarch of Antioch, and greatly eulogized in his times†.

It appears that Tuscany was destined to produce the most illustrious canonists, for none certainly, in the history of this jurisprudence, has been considered greater than John, of Andrew the Mugillan, who, whether born in Bologna, of Mugellan parents†, or in Mugello itself;

* Negri, Scritt. Fior.

† Pancir. de clar. Legum Inter. lib. 3. cap. 11. Serti e Fattorini, de claris, &c.

‡ That his parents were from Mugello, there is no doubt, (see Filippo Villani Fior. illus. e Domenico Aretino;) that he was born in Bologna, as Tiraboschi believes, does not appear to me so clear, since from all that has been said, it is inferred that John, at the age of eight years, was in Bologna, but not that he was born there. It is true that Villani does not say precisely that he was born in Mugello, but after having mentioned his Mugellan parents, it appears that he has not thought necessary to add, born too in Mugello. If Filippo Villani had known that John was born in Bologna, he would not probably have failed to add it, as every sensible writer would do, when the parents are of one country, and the children born in another. The argument of Tiraboschi is weak, that he is born in Bologna, because in the account that he gives of himself, in which he denies having asserted that he was son of a priest, he never mentions either Mugello or Tuscany, but only the churches and the towers of Bologna. Supposing that he was born in Mugello, he was conducted to Bologna before eight years of age; therefore he could scarcely have an idea of the places of his birth, and in this account it never came into recollection to ask him if an idea of it remained in him.

whether he owes his birth to lawful matrimony, or is the child of an amour, may be regarded as Tuscán in every respect. The esteem, in which he was held, is inferred from the honours which were paid him; from the splendid embassies in which he was employed*, and from the riches he acquired. He had various sons, but his daughters Novella and Bettina have received from historians no little celebrity; and the former must have attracted a greater number of scholars than her father himself, when, mounting the pulpit, she took his place, if to her legal knowledge she united a countenance so agreeable as history tells us, that I know not whether the veil she then threw over her face, in order to prevent the distractions of the scholars, was capable of producing that effect†. The university of Pisa numbered Andrea amongst its professors‡. It is honourable for him to have enjoyed the friendship of Petrarch, particularly because that great man did not much esteem either the lawyers or the physicians of his age. He wrote various canonical works, but his comments upon the six books of the decretals, are the most celebrated. The subtilty of the interpretations forms its principal merit. The singular name of novels, given to this work, was a tribute to the name of his learned daughter: the additions to the Gloss of William Durante, and the Treaty of Judgments, are his other works, in which moderns labour to find motives for the superlative praises bestowed by his contemporaries upon this lawyer. He was, together with many other illustrious men, a victim to the fatal contagion of 1348.

* Gherard. Rerum. Ital. Script. vol. 18. In the same we read: "Famosissimús Doctor Bononiensis qui in mundo non habebat similem, videlicet Joannes Andreae."

† Wolf. de Mulier erud.

‡ Fabbrucci e Fabbroni.

Passing over various others who distinguished themselves in Tuscany, in this study, greater real merit, although less reputation, was probably acquired by a Florentine citizen, Lapo of Castellonchio, who obtained an equivocal renown in the civil discords of Florence, and whom history describes to us as a man without character, ready to follow any party that offered him the greatest reward; so that he only drew down shame and confusion upon his native country, and his exile preceded the tragic rebellion of the Ciompi*. He had nourished his intellect with the lecture of the classics that were then known; found delight in the writings of Cicero, into which he made diligent research; and to him his friend Petrarch owed the oration in defence of Milon, the Philippias, and the Institutions of Quintilian. There was not a poet then known that passed not through his hands†: thus he was enabled to clothe the naked and horrid thorns of jurisprudence with something agreeable; and his friend Petrarch often upbraided him with having abandoned the pleasing studies, for the more obscure and often sophistical subtleties of law‡. For about twenty years he was professor of canonical science in the college of Florence, and was charged, in the mean time, with many honourable embassies to popes and republics, expelled afterwards from his native country, and banished to Barcelona; but paying little attention to the orders of the Florentine mob, he took shelter in Padua, where he was elected professor in spite of the representations that the Florentine republic, by public letter§, made against him. He possessed no less knowledge and dexterity in political affairs, than profoundness in letters; by

* Lib. 3. cap. 14.

† Colucc. Salut.

‡ Mhus, Vita di Lapo di Castellonchio.

§ Mhus, Vita Ambr. Camal. p. 241.

which he gained the good will of Charles of Hungary, called Charles of the Peace, upon his passage into Italy; and going with him to Rome, he prevailed so much with Pope Urban VI., as to induce him to crown Charles King of Naples, of which the pope himself gave an honourable and infallible testimony, by asserting it in a public consistory; and thus become dear to both, created counsellor by King Charles, and senator by the pope, he died in tranquillity in that city*.

To the canonists should be added the theologists of this age, but the union of theological and canonical doctrine that took place in some universities, dispenses us from speaking more about them; besides which, the scarcity of professors, the barbarism in which the study of sacred sciences was involved, and the necessary brevity of our dissertation, allow us not to be very diffuse in treating of them; it will therefore be sufficient to mention two Pisans who were very learned in this study. The first is Bernardo of Pisa, who gained admiration for his theological knowledge in the school kept by him in Paris, of whose knowledge and learning we have an honourable proof in the letter of Peter, Cardinal of S. Grisogono, to Alexander the Third†. The other is Pandolf of Pisa, called also Cardinal Mosca, be he or not the same person as many maintain. He must be regarded in fact rather as a writer of ecclesiastical history, since to him we are indebted for the lives of the pontiffs, from Gregory VII. probably, down to Alexander III‡. He thought also of writing the history of his country, or at least of the celebrated conquest of the Balearian isles; but either he did not carry it into execution, or the

* Ann. 1381.

† Boulay, Hist. Univ. Par.

‡ Mem. d'illus. Pisani, tom. 4. Elogio del Card. Mosca.

writings have been lost. His various learning, particularly in sacred studies, justifies us in making mention of him too amongst theologists. He was not an idle letterato, but was serviceable to religion and his country in important public affairs.

Many other learned men, Pisans and Florentines, such as Bartolomew of S. Concordio, the blessed Jordan, Cavalca, Passavanti, will be more properly mentioned amongst the elegant writers, particularly as their reputation still survives them.

MEDICINE.

That medicine was immersed in barbarity, at this age, in Italy, will not excite our wonder; since all the auxiliary sciences were more or less so. But barbarous times, as well as the most cultivated, have produced physicians who have been looked upon as prodigies in the art. How great was the poverty of medical knowledge in the ancient times of Hippocrates! how vast is the riches of our own! anatomy, that ought to be the foundation of that science was hardly known, religious superstition forbidding the cutting of bodies; botany, and natural history were very poor, and the name of chemistry was rarely heard of. Each of these is become so extensive in our days, that the life of a man is hardly sufficient to know any of them well. What a difference! and nevertheless if Hippocrates could return in our times with all his poverty of natural knowledge, hardly do I think any person would hesitate an instant in choosing him for his physician. His simple and golden writings are still the primary code, which gives laws to the art; and excepting two or three cures which accident and not reasoning has discovered, the methods of Hippocrates are still the guide of wise physicians at this day, as they

were 3000 years ago. From which, if true, one fatal and painful consequence follows; viz., that the copious natural acquirements of modern physicians, which so much adorn their theories, and render their discourses so eloquent around the beds of their patients, are useless, at least to the sick. Those acquirements are beautiful and true, the application of them to the sound or sick body, to the nature of diseases and their cure is what is called *medical theory*: this passage is a leap which passes frequently from light to darkness, a certain ring of communication being wanting, which might unite demonstrated truths to others of equal evidence. The ring is loosened, and consequently the reasoning, which thence takes its rise, becomes fluctuating. In this darkness modest conjectures would be pardonable, nay, praiseworthy; but we speak for the most part either of the causes of the sound vital functions or of those of their disconcert with a kind of mathematical certainty*; thus at least speak the medical systems or hypotheses, to prove the insufficiency of which, it is sufficient to observe the rapidity with which they rise and fall, and in what number, in the few years of so much light of philosophy, they have succeeded among us, there not being even an imbecile mind, which can believe the latter true. The venerable old man of Cos observed the qualities of diseases and the effects of the cures, paying little attention to theories, and reducing medicine to what it should be, to a kind of experimental

* The author is acquainted with many learned physicians, who, far from using such a language, make use only of a certain noble style of doubt, which is the most sure sign of the true knowledge of the art. It is necessary too to be discreet, since that language is important with idiotical persons, that is, with at least three fourths of the human race. Boerhaave himself, one of the greatest practical physicians, teaches us to use a kind of imposture with young men who begin to practise.

philosophy. What little the art can shew of the true and solid, is owing to this method. The wisest physicians of all times have followed the rules established since the age of Hippocrates, and therefore in all times there may have been good physicians, in spite of the most extravagant theories, if it is true that these are so many physical romances, which have no influence upon the art of healing. It is no wonder, therefore, if even the barbarous times, upon which we are now employed, have boasted of physicians of high repute. If the medicine of Italy, in these obscure ages, did not entirely derive its origin from the Arabic school, it drew from it both treatments and theories. The Salernitan school flourished since the eleventh century*. It is uncertain to whom it owes its birth. The monastery of Monte Casino for a time did not disdain this art, and the individuals who inhabited it, thought with great wisdom they could employ the time that remained to them after their devout prayers in support of afflicted humanity. Medicine was usefully cultivated by them in the most ancient times, and the vicinity with Salerno perhaps communicated medical knowledge to persons in that city, who, absolved from every ecclesiastical duty, could devote all their time to such a study. Perhaps Constantine, the African, who, like the ancient Greeks, travelled into the east, and remained a time at Babylon, had acquired physical and medical knowledge, returning, after thirty-seven years' absence, to Carthage, his native country; and being calumniated, on account of too much learning, as a magician, and threatened with death, he took refuge at Salerno, where he either brought

* Sig. Napoli Signorelli has proved that its foundation is not to be attributed to the Arabians.

with him, or augmented, medical knowledge, and promoted its study*. Be it as it may, the Salernitan school enjoyed great credit: for many ages, the rules of health of that school, written in barbarous Latin verses†, have been familiar; although many of them are false and capricious, and many ages were necessary to elapse before they sunk into oblivion; from these fountains, the Italian medicine, and consequently the Tuscan, drew its origin. Much celebrity and but little learning have been handed down to us of the Tuscan physicians of those times. Arezzo can produce many of them, and, above the rest, Faricio the monk, who was illustrious in medicine at the beginning of the twelfth century; passing into England, he became abbot of the monastery of Aberdeen, and was held in great repute for his medical knowledge by the monarchs of that kingdom‡. Near the middle of the thirteenth century many Tuscan physicians illustrated the university of Bologna, little before which time probably medicine was separated from surgery, and its professors, on account of such a distinction, assumed the name of philosophical physicians (*medici fisici*)§. After Raniero the Aretine, Lorenzo and Bocca the Pistoiese, Sinigardo another Aretine, distinguished himself greatly in that University; in spite of the canonical objections, he united the first ecclesiastical dignities with medicine; was not only a canon of Faenza,

* The brother of the King of Babylon, coming to Salerno, recognised him, and recommended him to the famous Robert Guiscardo: Constantine afterwards took the habit in Mount Casino, practised medicine, and translated many works from the Arabian.

† Probably from John of Milan.

‡ Wil. Malmesbury *de Gestis Pontif. Anglor.* lib. 2.

§ Sarti e Fattorini *de claris*, &c. par. 2.

but arch-priest of Bologna, a dignity wont to be given to the principal families: as such he came to the provincial council of Ravenna, and to other interesting ecclesiastical acts: acquired infinite riches by medicine, and was considered as one of the first luminaries of that university. He kept about him another Aretine, his assistant and apothecary, called Veneziano, who also, after the death of Sinigardo, practised medicine with applause.

We will only mention the names of Tommasino of Cortona, of Bartolo* and Michael of Montebuoni; Florentines, as of Ungelieri of Prato, of Eleseo and Guido Siennese, and Guido of Gello, a Pisan: all distinguished themselves in that university, but none enjoyed in his life so much celebrity, and acquired such great riches, as the Florentine Taddeo Alderotti. Whether his birth was rendered illustrious by the patrician stock of the Alderotti, or was so humble that he had himself exercised the trade of a tallow-chandler near *à San Michele* †, is not well ascertained. Until he was thirty years of age he gave no signs of talent. Then it was that his weak spirit awakened, and going to the university of Bologna, he became the most celebrated physician of his age. He was indebted for his fame, probably, to a novelty that he introduced, or rather renewed, in medicine, viz., *theory*. Before him that art had been restricted in the most barbarous times to the rules established by ancient, or more recent, observations, without the luxury of theories. Simple and severe, it was probably more chaste and less dangerous, and soon exhausted its precepts; the pomp

* He was physician of King Enzo, prisoner in Bologna, as were also Eliseo the Siennese and the famous Taddeo.

† Villani, dei Fiorentini illustri.

and eloquence of the chair could not be contented with the accustomed dry brevity. We have already seen, that surgery being separated from medicine, the physicians had taken the addition of philosophy, and then it was, probably, that they began to theorize*. But Taddeo is looked upon as the principal, who added the physical explanations of morbid phenomena and of the action of remedies, (what explanations!) drawn from the dark philosophy of that age. His medical knowledge may be called in doubt by moderns, but his riches and universal reputation are certain. He wrote commentaries upon Hippocrates and Galen, applying the barbarous and obscure philosophy of that age to the simple and true observations of those wise physicians, and thus fabricating strange theories. He, however, was considered as an oracle. Cotemporary with Accursio, he acquired as great merit in medicine, as Accursio in jurisprudence, and his medical treatises were as respectfully obeyed as the legal ones of Accursio: even his scholars enjoyed uncommon privileges. Called to practical exercise by popes and sovereigns, he put an excessive price upon his art; the sick submitted to the law, and thus Taddeo acquired immense riches†. The

* Sarti e Fatt. de Clariss., &c., par. 2.

† See Filip. Vill. F. illustri Sarti, &c. These anecdotes, either true or false, may be read in the quoted works. Villani relates, (Vit. de' Fior. illus.) that the pope being ill, and desiring Taddeo for physician, the latter would not agree for less than a hundred scudi in gold a day for his salary. The pope was astonished; he agreed, however, and reproached Taddeo for his hardness. He answered that other princes and gentlemen had not paid him less than fifty scudi a day, whence to him, who was the first sovereign, the price of a hundred ought not to appear too much. The pope being cured, either out of gratitude, or in order to get rid of the suspicion of avarice, made him a present of 100,000 ducats,—some say 200,000, others, 10,000,

medical school of Taddeo was continued by Dino del Garbo, a Florentine, who was his scholar*. A professor of great credit in Bologna, he was obliged to leave it, either from the interdict given against that city, or from the envy that persecuted him. He professed at Sienna, and at Padua, the same science; wrote commentaries upon the works of Avicenna, and to the treatise of Hippocrates upon the nature of the foetus, he added an epistle upon supper and upon dinner. From the exposition of the song of Guido Cavalcanti upon the nature of love, we perceive, that to the severer studies, he united the pleasure of letters. His name, however, is obscured by the suspicion of having contributed to the condemnation of the unfortunate Cecco d'Ascoli, burnt in Florence, who was a learned man of those times, professor of astrology and philosophy in Bologna, and also a poet. It would be difficult to establish with precision, what kind of heretical opinion he was charged with; astrology was not a crime, being publicly professed in the universities; whence it appears, that the envy of his knowledge, which, in those times must have appeared very great, excited, probably, by his irritable character, and the persecution of Dino, brought him to that tragic end. All this may be inferred from the account of John Villani upon Dino and Acco. That he denied the free will in the book he published upon the sphere, or his comments upon the sphere of John of Sacro Bosco, does not appear natural; since in his poem, *the Acerba*, he even accuses Dante of this error, and clearly acknowledges the free will; and in the sentence of the Florentine inquisitor, published by

which is the most probable. The catalogue of his works is seen in the frequently quoted Sarti e Fattorini, &c.

* Filipp. Vallani, Fior. Illust.

Doctor Lami, no mention is made of the crime. The strange and invidious character of Cecco is discovered in some parts of the *Acerba*, where he wishes to attack the verses of Dante, and with not much modesty, put himself above him, and he has the misfortune to criticise one of the most sublime pieces of Italian poetry, that upon Count Ugolino: the following are his verses:

Qui non si canta al modo delle Rane,
 Qui non si canta al modo del Poeta,
 Che finge imaginando cosa vane, &c.

After other three lines that allude to the facts sung by Dante, he follows,—

Non veggio il Conte, che per ira ed asto
 Ten forte l'Arcivescovo Ruggiero
 Prendendo dal suo ceffo fero pasto, &c.

But to return to the Florentine physicians. Torigiano, as well as Dino, was scholar of Taddeo, and professor in the university of Paris, and in a very advanced age appears to have put on the habit of the order of preachers, and of the Certosini*. To Dino del Garbo we will add his son Thomas, both in order to unite him with his father, (than whom he was even more celebrated), and for the singularity of his having been esteemed by a great man, well known for the sovereign contempt in which he held medicine, namely, Petrarch; who from fear of contradicting himself, calls him not the greatest, but the most famous†. He wrote comments upon some works of Galen and advice how to live in times of pestilence, which may deserve particular attention; since he lived in times of one of the

* Filippo Vill. Fior. Illust. Mazzuch. Tirab. Ist. della Lett. Ital. tom. 5.

† Petr. Senil. lib. 12. ep. 1.

greatest plagues that have desolated the earth, viz., that of 1348. But as we are employed, in this short literary report, rather with the improvements added to science by illustrious Tuscans than with the persons of the authors, we have already said enough both upon jurisprudence and medicine. Upon the latter we will only observe, that since in every age respectable men are met with, who have directly attacked it, and a number still greater who have despised it, we have a new proof, at least, of its uncertainty; the same fate not having happened to philosophy, mathematics, and other sciences that proceed with other methods in their researches: and exactly in this age medicine had the misfortune to meet with an enemy in the greatest man then alive, the celebrated Petrarch, who omits no opportunity of attacking physicians, sometimes with sound reasoning*, and sometimes with comical tales, describing the pomp with which they appeared in public; a pomp which according to him, had the air of a triumph, and which, he says, some of them deserved, if not less than 5,000 men slain were required by the Roman republic in order that a

* The aphorism of Hippocrates, *Ars longa, vita brevis*, is commented upon by Petrarch, "*Vitam medici dum brevem dixerunt brevissimam effecerunt.*" The learned d'Alembert, in his eulogy of Regnier, who was one of the incredulous in medicine, after having conceded that it cannot be denied there were cases in which medicine comforts the sick; and very many others in which it disturbs and destroys nature by wishing to assist her, adds: that the only manner of deciding the question, would be to see by experience if people live longer without medicine; (he ought I think to have said more sound), than those who use it: "*Mais malheureusement les peuples sauvages qui n'ont que la nature pour medecin, n'ont point de registres mortuaires et les peuples civilisés qui ont fait une science de l'art de guérir, ne se laisseront pas aisément persuader d'en proscrire, ou d'en suspendre l'usage.*"

hero might obtain the honour of a triumph * ; nor does he cease to relate the false medical presages which happened to others and to himself. Some have believed that the hatred he bore physicians was innate in him, by a bitter reply of a physician of Pope Clement VI. to the letter of Petrarch to this pontiff, in which he advises him to beware of too many physicians ; this cause, however, can only have sharpened to the most the arms of contempt, in which he held that art ; since in the letter itself, prior to the answer, he discovers the same sentiments ; and the facts, which occurred to himself, were too well adapted to confirm it. But even when speaking quietly to any physician, who might be his friend, he evinces the same opinion. It is wonderful to see how a man unfurnished with medical knowledge, can contend with the greatest physicians by force of genius : the medical art and the rules of theory are seen contending with good sense, ignorant as it was, of the art, and the latter almost always prevailing †. From the pomp with which the physicians walked, from the honours and the premiums which they received from princes and great gentlemen we may infer the great esteem in which

* Senil. lib. 5. ep. 4.

† We read among the old works (libro 12.) the two letters to John Dandi, physician, his friend, who advised him to change his method of food in the sixty-third year of his age : we shall see with what good sense he reasons upon an art unknown to him. He accords with him in laying aside the use of fish, and salt meat, not so, however, apples, or the custom of feeding once a day only, to fast rigorously once a week on bread and water, and not to use pure water. If we bear in mind the use of this method which had been uninterrupted since the days of childhood, we shall perceive how dangerous it would have been to change it at this age, as Louis Cornaro proved, who had been seduced by the continual discourses of physicians.—V. Cornar. della Vita Sopr.

medicine was held at a time in which, (if in our days, as is commonly believed, it has made such progress) it was still in infancy. Its improvement has increased, and the esteem has been declining. I will not decide whether this arose at that time from the ignorance of the age, or whether the world, by becoming more enlightened, has reduced it to its true rank. It must not be denied, however, that this great man speaks rather against the physicians of his time than against medicine, and few will say he is in the wrong. It may be no small consolation to physicians, against the invectives of Petrarch, to reflect, that he has not spared even lawyers*. He cast the same ridicule, but with greater reason, upon Astrology, with which medicine has had the misfortune to be for so long time associated: the comical facts he relates, and particularly the solemn importance, with which the astrologer of Visconti entertained the whole court, and the Milanese people, assembled to wait the propitious hour, in which the three brothers, Visconti, Matteo, Bernabo, and Galeazzo, were to take possession of their estates, are fit to amuse every sensible reader, who is acquainted with the unhappy fate of those brothers†. Although the vanity of astrology may be easy to understand, it must nevertheless afford no small glory to Petrarch, to have known the folly of it in an age in which it was commonly respected, and to have maintained himself above universal prejudices.

* Letter to Marcus from Genoa, Edit. di Gen. 1601. lib. 2. ep. 4.

† Petrarch only saw the omens of Matteo belied, who, in a year, lost the signiory of Bologna, and died at an early age. He would have had even reason to ridicule still more the astrologer, if he had been spectator of the tragic end of Bernabo.—Senil. lib. 1. ep. 6.

This science, (if, indeed, we may be allowed to pollute the name by applying it so badly), the pretension of guessing at the future, was at that time almost indispensably associated with medicine, as anatomy, or botany, in our times. We should do great injury to medicine by confounding them together, having sometimes no other similarity between them but in the bold prognostications which the novitiates in the medical art dare to pronounce. The anxiety of guessing at the future, has kept astrology in credit at all times; and the Roman people thought they could read it in the flight of birds, or in the smoking bowels of animals *. The profession of this ridiculous science has disgraced the catalogue of the professors of Bologna and Padua. Princes and republics maintained the office of Astrologer, as they afterwards did that of theologist and physician. As a Florentine, am I to vindicate or to discard one of the most famous astrologers of those times, Guido Bonatti? If the city of Forli pretends to call him her own, we will yield him willingly, although Philip Villani makes him a Florentine and native of Cascia. The little princes of Italy contended for him. He was thought the wisest man of his age; since the art of divining the future, upon reasoning, was thought the greatest. He boldly boasts of many prophecies verified †, and of the most

* *Spirantia consultit exta.*—Virg. *Æn.* 4. It is believed that the Romans made use of the science of augury as an act of policy, but it will always be a great dispute whether error is useful to the populace; since when once accustomed to error, they may be easily seduced by every bold impostor. Cicero did not much respect this prejudice and this policy; we cannot with greater reason, put an end to the follies of augurs, than with that which he has made use of in the golden book of *divination*.

† Esselino of Romano had always around him a number of astrologers, among whom was Bonatti and a Saracen, who, from his long

renowned victories which Guido Novello obtained by his means: he was nevertheless sometimes subjected to humiliating and ridiculous mortifications*. Nothing, however, can be more ridiculous, than to see public affairs depend upon astrologers' precepts; to contemplate, for example, that astrologer upon the tower of Forli, and the army of Count Novello, master of the city ready to march: the former giving, by the first touch of the bell, the signal to the Count to put on his armour; with the second, to get on horseback; and with the third, to march the army†. The Florentine republic in these times, too, renowned as she was for the wisdom of her citizens, made armies move at the direction of astrologers: hence the error became universal. We cannot even excuse moderns upon the example of the Romans; since the latter, probably, perceiving the impossibility of removing that error from the vulgar, endeavoured to profit of it to the public advantage, by instituting a college of augurs, whence the popular opinion might be directed by the government. That they generally, however, held in scorn the principles of that college, may be inferred, from the assertion of Cicero, who says, that when two augurs met each other, they laughed in each other's faces. Bonati wrote the rules of his art; and in order to ennoble and defend it,

beard and fierce aspect, was compared to Balaam. This man and others had presaged to him the most fatal events little before the battle of Cassano, in which he received the wound of which he afterwards died.—Malveg. Cron. Bras. Rer. Ital. tom. 8. Verri, Istori degli Ezzelini.

* He had foretold the serenity of the air: a peasant from the motion of the ears of his ass foretold rain, and was a better prophet.—Benv. de Im. Com. di Dante, Annales. Foroliv. Rer. Ital. tom. 22.

† Filipp. Vill. Fior. Illus.

maintained that Jesus Christ made use of judiciary astrology. In order to separate some pearl from so much dirt, Guido was skilled in what astronomical knowledge could be obtained in those times, as well as in philosophy; and his travels into Arabia must have enriched him with no common acquirements.

PHILOSOPHY AND MATHEMATICS.

It is pleasing in our times, amidst the light that mathematics, observation, and experience have shed over natural effects, to turn ourselves back and survey the darkness from which we have lately escaped, and which has covered the earth for so many ages. That which happens at the beginning of the life of a man, is often true in the long course of age. The last faculty that awakens itself in mankind, is reason. If this rule is applied to past ages, and to the science of nature, it will not only be found true, but will appear to have remained even in a lethargy, to which it did not appear destined. After the force of imagination, both in Greece and Rome, had traversed all the objects, of which that faculty is capable, even beyond the limits which beautiful nature has assigned to them; after reason itself has so much embellished morality amongst the groves of Academus, or upon the Tusculan hills, natural effects were still covered with a veil, and it may be said, that veil was not raised with safety, until the end of the sixteenth century of the Christian era. The want of method in investigating natural effects, was the cause of the ancients making such little progress in the science of nature. Instead of interrogating it with observation, and forcing it to answer by experiments, they pretended to guess at it from the solitary closet by subtle reasonings. For a long series of ages,

human genius, in natural science, was like a traveller, who having gone out of the road without perceiving it, as long as he walks, never arrives at the end of his journey. The only science that was cultivated with some advantage by the ancients, was astronomy: the celestial bodies continually exposed to their view, presented also to the idle and the unastronomical, simple observations, which, being frequently repeated, must have given rise to a history of the heavens at least sufficient to comprehend facts, which were capable of serving successive astronomers: since as many phenomena of the heavens embrace a space superior to the course of human life, in order to infer something precise, it became necessary to compare the observations of different ages and of different philosophers. The prudent critic, who does not suffer himself to be deluded by the glossy conjectures of whoever, perhaps from singularity and pomp of genius, has chosen to attribute so much to the ancients*; who does not infer a discovery from an ambiguous expression; nor imagines physical mysteries veiled by fables, turning their physical works, confesses their poverty. We meet (we must confess) in this solitude with two or three men, who having cultivated the most secure science, mathematics, have been brought to surprising truths. Such in Italy was the Tarentine Archita, acknowledged as one of the greatest mathematicians of antiquity, who applied abstract geometrical truths to mechanical purposes; who gave a practical proof of his genius in the construction of the celebrated dove of wood, which imitated the flight of the true doves; and another speculative in the solution of the famous problem of the doubling of the cube, which, being handed down

* Découvertes des anciens attribuées aux modernes.

to our days, gives us a very favourable idea of the genius of Archita*, whose calculating mind, after many ages, merited an eulogy from the Roman lyric poet†. But Archimedes distinguished himself in these sciences even more than Archita, and the former may be placed in an illustrious triumvirate with Galileo and Newton. All three are celebrated for not having employed themselves upon abstract speculations of mathematics; but for having applied them to natural philosophy with useful success, which is particularly the mark of that sublime talent, which sees the connexion between the abstract and the concrete, and, by an ingenious method, knows how to render abstract truths fruitful. Mechanism, above all, is much indebted to Archimedes, for the demonstration of the action of the swell of the sea, for the invention of the *helice*, or *vite perpetua*; and for another very useful instrument, called the *coclea* of Archimedes, by which means water, by an ingenious contrivance, and by a whimsical contradiction, whilst it descends by an inclined plane, finds itself insensibly raised to a considerable height. The construction of the sphere, whereon are shewn, in compendium, the heaven and earth, and motion of the stars, is, by Cicero, believed to be a work of more than human genius‡; with many

* Montucla, Hist. des Mathématiques.

† Te maris, et coeli, numeroque carentis arenæ
Mensorem cohibent Archita.—HON. Od. 28. lib. 1.

‡ Ne in sphæra quidem eisdem motus Archimedes sine divino ingenio potuisset imitari.—Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

See the epigram of Claudian :

Jupiter in parvo cum cerneret æthera vitro
Risit, et ad superos talia dicta dedit;
Hucine mortalis progressa potentia curæ
Jam meus in fragili luditur orbe labor?
Jura poli, rerumque fidem legesque deorum

Ecce

other great discoveries, which have excited the highest admiration of that mathematician. We will leave aside all that has been treated as fabulous, as the construction of the immense ship described by Athenæus, or the terrible proofs of his art against the Romans at the siege of Syracuse; but his ingenious demonstrations of the proportion of the sphere to the cylinder, and the other truths that accompany it, as the approximation of the measure of the circle, still exist; and what, above all, characterizes his more than human genius, are the seeds of one of the most sublime mathematical discoveries of our days, of the infinite calculation, the embryos of which, born under Archimedes, and further developed by the scholars of Galileo, Torricelli, and Cavalieri, arrived at their maturity through the industry of the English mathematician. This great man is a kind of isolated colossus, too superior to every thing that stands around him by distance of ages, however great, to have any connexion with him; one of those individuals, who form rather the exception than the rule of the human species, and which nature appears to produce from time to time in order to display her power. He was neither the scholar nor master

*Ecce Siracusinus transtulit arte senex
Inclusus variis famulatur spiritus astris
Et vivum certis motibus urget opus.
Percurrit proprium mentitor signifer annum
Et simulata novo Cynthia mense redit:
Jamque suum volvens undax industria mundum
Gaudet, et humana sidera mente regit;
Quid falso insontem tonitru Salmoëa misit?
Æmulæ naturæ parva reperta manus.*

Keeping ourselves to historical facts with the testimony of all the ancients, we shall attribute the ingenious invention of this machine to Archimedes, leaving conjecture to find it under the veil of fable in Atlas, who, by carrying it upon his shoulders, is therefore said to have carried the universe.—Bailly *Astronomie Ancienne*.

of his age; shined therein as a stupendous, but momentary, meteor; and, when extinguished, the age returned to its accustomed obscurity.

If, in the golden age of Greece and Rome, natural science made only few and slow steps, it is easy to imagine that, in those times of calamity, which, for more than six centuries, covered Italy, it must have always remained neglected. When, on recovering itself, reason was applied to natural philosophy, instead of improving the method of researches it continued even growing worse. The works of Aristotle (translated partly from the Greek, partly from the Arabic) were almost the only book from which natural knowledge was derived. Able to draw but little from their own fund, men studied in that book; and, looking upon it almost as the code of nature, persuaded themselves that every phrase of Aristotle contained a truth. Attracted to the universities with religious veneration, and interpreted as an oracle, in which the truth was to be found, Aristotle was at once created the legislator of nature; and, although in some kingdoms, and particularly at Paris, there existed wicked persons, who spoke against his name, these soon retired, and the veneration of him became almost universal. Even among the sands of Africa, the Arabic subtilties of Averroë had established his adoration, and contributed to increase his authority even in Europe; so that, if the venerable old Stagirite had arisen at that time from the tomb, he would have been astonished at his glory, and would perhaps more than once have laughed at his commentators*. The interpretation of Aristotle gave rise to a singular language, which might be called the Peripatetic, composed of words, which have had

* See Swift.

the honour to be equivalent to things for so long a time. Thus *substance, form, accidents, substantial form, the essences, the quantities, the qualities*, with many other such words, formed a vocabulary, in which the keys of natural secrets were supposed to be hidden. The understanding of these obscure words formed the philosophical science of those times. The scholars were conducted into this darkness which none perceived, because the dark was uniform ; and if, at times, any one ventured to see more clearly, the authority of so many universities from which such a cant was authenticated,—the numerous tribes of so many who passed for very learned, who adored the name, and swore upon the words, of Aristotle,—made him quietly doubt of those lights which internal reason suggested to him ; or, at least, prudence counselled him to be silent, well knowing that a wise man amongst a crowd of fools becomes himself the fool.

In order to confirm still more upon mankind the empire of this barbarous philosophy, it became associated with divine science, and participated of the same veneration. It was thought that the simple moral of the gospel, or its more venerable than intelligible mysteries stood in need either of scholastical subtleties, or of the dark Peripatetic phrases, to be better demonstrated. Strengthened in this manner by innumerable defenders, the reign of Aristotle has lasted for so long a time ; it has often been the interest of governments to support it* ; and has only fallen after repeated blows of the strongest evidence. When we consider the slow progress of

* See Launogus de Var. Aristot. Fortuna.—Francis I., King of France, induced by the loud clamours of many ignorant persons, has debased and almost rendered his reputation as protector of letters ridiculous in face of posterity by the edict in which he prefers a

natural philosophy, and the long infancy, in which it has been buried for so many ages ; the rapid flight that it has taken in the two last, and the number of truths that it has discovered ; in admiring the certainty of the method with which it proceeds, we can only lament that this certain method had not been followed by mankind since the most ancient times. We must, however, do justice to the old philosophers of Greece and Rome. Although ignorant of the true method of searching out natural truths,—although sometimes we have abused them, too, for words given as causes of effects, the effects themselves described with a various turn of words, they still have not made so shameful an abuse of them as in the times of which we have spoken ; we discover in their writings a nudity of philosophical knowledge, but without arrogance and pretension to riches ; whilst in the

solemn condemnation against Ramus, because he contended against the philosophy of Aristotle. We may read in many books the decree that begins, “ François, par la grace de Dieu, &c. Comme entre autres grandes sollicitudes que nous avons toujours eu de bien ordonner et établir la chose publique de notre royaume, nous avons mis toute la peine possible de l’accroître et de l’enrichir des toutes bonnes lettres et sciences, &c., les docteurs ayant été d’avis que le dit Ramus avoit été téméraire, arrogant et imprudent d’avoir reprouvé et condamné le train et l’art de logique, reçue de toutes les nations, et parceque en son livre des animadversions il reprenoit Aristote, étoit évidemment connue, et manifeste son ignorance ;...nous condamnons, supprimons, abolissons les dits deux livres, faisons inhibitions et défenses au dit Ramus, à peine de punitions corporels, de plus user de telles médisances et invectives contre Aristote, &c.

Another decree, equally ridiculous, was made in the year 1624 by the parliament of Paris, against the literati, Villan, Bitault, and De Cleves, accused of *having composed and published theses against the doctrine of Aristotle*. The said authors are exiled in that decree : *Fait défense à toutes personnes à peine de la vie de tenir ou enseigner aucune maxime contre les anciens auteurs et approuvées*. The majesty of the laws cannot be demeaned by greater ridicule.

peripatetic pride, which pretended to explain every thing, we are presented with an ambitious poverty for this reason the more ridiculous. In the scanty documents of ancient philosophy, in the midst of many errors, we discover fine truths, conformable to that which experience, observation, and mathematics, have shewn to moderns; and in the verses of Lucretius (wherein are comprehended the philosophy of Democritus, of Leucippus, and Epicurus) we find the foundation of the Newtonian doctrine. Atoms, void, and motion, the incorruptibility of the principles that compose bodies, the ascent of vapours from the bosom of the sea, their impulse, and consequently their arrest, on the sides of mountains; and thence the rain, gravity of air, the cause of the non-increase of the sea, the origin of the plague, and the assertion, very wonderful for those times, that in the hollow, bodies of different weight, such as a feather and a piece of lead, must move with the same velocity*, with many other physical truths, shew the right sense of the ancient philosophers, from whom the poet has drawn them. Even the simple principles of that philosophy form a contrast with the modern imaginary hypothesis of Cartesian to the

* This truth, demonstrated the first time by Galileo, of which those who are not initiated in mathematics hardly can be persuaded, to a degree that the experiment of the hollow becomes necessary to convince them, has been expressed with great precision by Lucretius in the following verses:

Nam per aquas quæcumque cadunt atque æra deorsum,
Hæc pro ponderibus casus celerare necesse est;
Propterea, quia corpus aquæ naturæque tenuis
Æris haud possunt æque rem quæcumque morari,
Sed citius cedunt gravioribus exuperata.
At contra nulli de nulla parte, neque ullo
Tempore, inane potest vacuum subsistere rei,
Quin, sua quod natura petit, concedere purgat.
Omnia, quæ propter debent per inane quietum
Æque ponderibus non æquis concita ferri:

great disadvantage of the latter; because built after Bacon and Galileo had pointed out the true road. Amidst the darkness which, in these ages, covered philosophy throughout Europe, Tuscany alone throws out some sparks, which already point out the country destined to produce a Galileo. It is well known how the Roman year, rudely regulated by Numa, who pretended to combine the lunar and the solar periods, had fallen at the time of Julius Cæsar into such confusion, that the seasons wandered from their accustomed positions. Cæsar being in the College of Augurs, to whom the regulation of such matters belonged, conceived its reform. Sosigenes being called from Alexandria, which was then the seat of astronomy, the civil year was regulated by his counsel upon the course alone of the sun. This planet finishes its period in the space of three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours, less five minutes, according to Hipparchus. Sosigenes proposed to form the year of three hundred and sixty-five days; and to keep account of the six hours, or fourth part of the day, in order to add one day more every four years to the month of February. He conceived, therefore, that he might, without sensible error, neglect five minutes, with which the day was increased. His plan was adopted; and Cæsar had the glory of this reform by giving his name to that period. But the error was more considerable, extending itself every year to about eleven minutes, the revolution of the sun being completed in three hundred and sixty-five days five hours forty-nine minutes, less some small fraction*. Every four years were added forty-five minutes more, so that the beginning of the true year always preceded considerably that of the civil year, and in the space of one hundred and

* La Lande 365. g. 5° 48' 48'

thirty-two years the difference amounted to a day. At the time of the council of Nice, in the year of the christian era 325, the equinox of spring had been fixed at the 21st of March, to regulate the Easter. From that time every one hundred and thirty-two years the civil equinox was postponed a day, or the true and astronomical one anticipated as much. The error became at last so considerable, that Sixtus IV. conceived the project of a correction, which was carried into execution by Gregory XIII. But before the error became so visible, in the ninth century, in times of so much ignorance, some Florentine philosopher had perceived the irregularity. In a calendar which exists in Santa Maria del Fiore, the ecclesiastical equinox is distinguished with all precision from the astronomical: the first was that fixed at the times of the council of Nice for the celebration of Easter on the 21st of March, as noted in the calendar; but it is added, that the entrance of the sun into Aries, which was the true equinox, happened on the 18th day of June*; and in order that no doubt may remain, the same is repeated of the autumnal equinox, showing that there is always a difference of three days; and the same is said of the solstices. Now calculating the anticipation of the equinoxes upon four centuries, which had elapsed since the celebration of the council of Nice, about the time of the calendar, we find that it must have been exactly three days. But how were the Florentines able to make such discoveries in ages of so much ignorance?

* See Leonard Ximenes, the old and new gnomon historical introduction, where this argument is treated with profoundness and learning. Other calendars are mentioned, from which it is also inferred that the Florentine observers had perceived the exposition of the equinoctial and solstitial points.

In the ancient temple of St. John, there existed an astronomical gnomon, the remains of which are still seen* upon the pavement, where the figure of the sun, contoured by an ingenious and barbarous verse, is the spot upon which, according to the testimony of John Villani, through an aperture which existed in his days in the Cupola, the solar ray, in the days only of the summer solstice, fell. This gnomon, probably the most ancient of the kind, shows with what intelligence the celestial motions were observed in Florence; whence it was not difficult for them to perceive the putting out of place of the solstices and equinoxes. The burying-place, discovered near the astronomical marble of Sforzo Sforzi, who was called by the double name of astrologer and general, who died in the year 1012, may probably prove the diligent observations that he had made, and which were in use even before the Florentine mathematicians made them.

Leonardo Fibonacci, a Pisan, the first who introduced algebra into Europe, is another no inconsiderable honour to Tuscany. His father, agent for the Pisans in the custom house of Bugia in Africa, called his son thither. He not only learned the arithmetical operations, practised by the Arabians, but had leisure to instruct himself perfectly in the long journeys which he undertook in Egypt, Syria, Greece, and elsewhere, for commercial purposes. That he has been the first to introduce Arabian numbers, as some have asserted, cannot be sustained, since the documents, whence we deduce them to have been prac-

* The figure of the sun is still seen with the verse that surrounds it:

En giro torte sol ciclos et rotor igne;

a verse that has the same words, read either right or reversed, but there does not exist a vestige of the hole or crack where the solar image passed.

tised before his time are very numerous; and we can only imagine that he increased the use of them probably by making some arithmetical observation public, which was not yet well known in Europe*. But no one can contend the primacy with him in Algebra: his books bear authentic testimony of it, from which we also learn the epochs of his life. The clean manuscript of the arithmetical book†, existing in the library Magliabecchiana, bears the date of 1202; another copy of the Riccardiana bears the same year, with the addition that it was corrected in the year 1228 by the author, and dedicated to Michael Scotto; and Scotto is precisely known in that time to have been an astrologer, and the friend of Leonardo. Finally, the other code of practical geometry, spoken of at this time by Riccobaldo and Pipino, which is preserved in the Magliabecchiana, bears the date of the year 1220. The concurrence of these dates in various manuscripts, leaves no doubt that the end of the twelfth, and beginning of the thirteenth, century, were the period in which Leonardo lived. That epoch being admitted, we find no one who has written algebra before him. Some doubt might fall upon William of Lunis; he is spoken of in an argument of algebra of Raphael Canacci, which manuscript is found in the house of the Signori Nelli, considered by antiquaries of the thirteenth century, which thus begins: *the rule of algebra, which rule William of Lunis has translated from Arabic to our*

* Vid. Targioni Viag. tom. 2. pag. 68.

† This is the title: "Incipit Liber Abaci compositus a Leonardo filio Bonacci Pisano in anno 1202;" and in the manuscript of the Riccardiana: "Incipit Liber Abaci a Leonardo filio Bonacci compositus anno 1202 et correctus ab eodem anno 1228. The title of the other work is: "Incipit pratica Geometria composita a Leonardo ex filiis Bonacci in anno 1220."

tongue; whence some one might doubt that William was prior to Leonardo: but the uncertainty of the date; the Italian language of which he makes use, and which was not yet common in writings in the times of Leonardo, the candid assertion of the latter who composed his book, in order that the Italians might not be any longer deprived of the complete science of numbers (whilst if any other had existed, he would have exposed himself to the accusation of having told a glaring falsehood) give a sufficient demonstration of the authority of his work*. It must be noted that Leonardo, with the candour that belongs to honest men, appropriates to himself no merit for the invention of methods, and to him alone must belong the manner of expounding and demonstrating them. And, indeed, in the Arabic books, that have been subsequently translated, the science is found in the same degree, in which it is in the book of Leonardo. In his other book of practical geometry, directed particularly to teach the measurement of land, we discover his extended knowledge of geometrical truths, and the easy methods of measuring plain and solid figures with precision. All which constitutes him a mathematician very superior to his contemporaries.

Astronomy, of which we have seen such luminous traces since remote times in Florence, continued afterwards to reckon many celebrated cultivators. Passing over various others, it is sufficient to mention Paolo Dagomaro, called the *geometrician*, who passed in his times for a wonder, as the eulogies of Villani†, of Boc-

* For other doubts that might be raised, see the eloquent eulogium of Fibonacci, written by the learned Father Grimaldi in the memoirs of illustrious Pisans.

† Filipp. Vill. Fior. illus.

caccio*, and in later times, of Verini†, attest. Unfortunately no work of his remains as testimony of his celebrity. If it is true that, with his astronomical observations, he succeeded in correcting the errors of the Alfonsan and Toletan tables, as Villani tells us; if he perceived changes in the apparent motion of the fixed stars, so as to deduce, according to Landini, the period of the great year; his merit for those times is of no little moment: but the documents are uncertain, and still more so those, from which it is endeavoured to infer that he was the inventor of algebraic operations‡. More probable it is that to the same astronomer belong the inedited ephemeris of the year 1366. From those also

* Gio. Bocc. de Genealo. Deor. lib. 15. cap. 6.

† Paulus et Astronomus, Paulus Geometer et idem
Philosophus novitque omnes doctissimus artes.
Vincit arithmetici Nilum Florentia chartis,
Assyriaque caput Babylon jam cedit Etruscis,
Tuscus ab extremo numerorum Gange figuras
Acceptit velox qui computat omnia signis.

‡ See Ximenes. Introd. allo Gnomone, &c. The word *equationes* that is found in the Latin text of Villani is difficult to interpret by algebraical equations, as the author wishes. Villani, who was not versed in such matters at a time when they were almost unknown, would have been considered a phenomenon if he had used the word *equationes* in the just algebraic sense. Probably he only understood, by that word, calculations and sums. For the algebraic signs Father Ximenes founds himself upon the verses quoted by Verini,

Tuscas ab extremo numerorum Gange figuras
Acceptit velox qui computat omnia signis.

Verini has written more than a century after Dagomari; and in those verses we perceive that Dagomari made use, like Fibonacci, of arabic numbers called *Indiani*, *signis* being understood for the Arabic ciphers not common, that is, *qui computat omnia his signis*. At least it does not appear to me conformable with good criticism, to wish to infer so great a consequence from the uncertain words of a poet, and of a poet too who had lived more than a century afterwards.

inedited of the year 1382, and from various other astronomers of Tuscany, it may be inferred that the study of astronomy, as far as the times permitted it, was sufficiently cultivated in Florence*. We will not deny that the object, to which those studies were particularly directed, was the hope and credulity of reading the future in the stars: but this is not the first instance of very useful effects produced by vain and imaginary causes. Even the desire of creating gold, although it may have caused time and money to be lost in useless attempts, has first produced interesting discoveries, and afterwards the art of chymistry, which is become so useful and extensive in our days. Florence, at this period too, boasts of another very useful discovery; that of assisting the weakness of sight. The ancients had perceived that a globe, either of solid glass, or full of water, applied to the eyes, rendered the objects greater and more distinct†. The celebrated Roger Bacon had gone a step further, by demonstrating that the same effect was obtained with the segment of the sphere‡. The making of glasses of a convex figure, until then unknown, and the ingenious contrivance of encasing them in two united circles, and adapted to be hung before the eyes, is owing to the Florentine Salvino Armati; upon whose sepulchre, which already existed in Santa Maria Maggiore, according to the testimony of Migliore and others, the inscription

* Fra. Corrado, Bishop of Fiesole, Messer Gio. da Lignano, Master Domenico of Arezzo, Master Antonio Florentine.

† *Literæ obscuræ et minutæ per interpositam pilam vitream aqua plenam clariores amplioresque cernuntur.* Senec. *Ques. Nat.* Plin. *Hist. Nat.* in very many passages, lib. 5. cap. 19. lib. 26. cap. 21. lib. 37. cap. 7. &c.

‡ *Smith Opt.* tom. 1.

designated him as the inventor of spectacles, which is inferred from various writers, and particularly from Manni. The invention goes down as far as the year 1285*. In order, however, not to defraud any one of the glory that he may have deserved, it must be confessed that Father Alexander Spina, getting acquainted with the discovery, was easily enabled to imitate it, either from having actually seen the glasses, or merely from having heard their mechanism described†. To attribute to him any thing further would be injustice, and the sound rules of criticism leave us in no doubt of the real name of the inventor, supporting our opinion upon the credit due to so respectable and immaculate a man as Migliore‡; otherwise in assertions, supported upon the testimony of authors, there would no longer be any criterion, and all would become darkness and uncertainty.

The age, the scientific history of which we have gone over, is certainly an age of ignorance, but at the same time, by a kind of whimsical contradiction, it is the age also of some of the greatest discoveries. To this epoch belongs the invention of gunpowder, that has made so great a revolution in the art of war. Changes still greater have arisen from the invention of the compass, by means of which mankind have ventured upon new

* Redi, Lett. a Carlo Dati. Manni degli occhiali da naso. Montucla Hist. des Matemat.

† In the very ancient chronicle of St. Catherine of Pisa it is said: "Frater Alexander de Spina, vir modestus et bonus quæcumque vidit, aut audivit facta scrivit et facere ocularia ab aliquo primo facta et communicare nolente ipse fecit et communicavit, &c." In another chronicle of the same convent is added, "iis visis statim nullo docente didicit, &c."

‡ Manni, degli Occhiali.

navigations, which were not to be attempted without that instrument; and the discovery of America, and the way to the East Indies, by the Cape of Good Hope, have changed the fortune and the riches of nations. Italy has become impoverished, and her riches have been divided amongst the English, Dutch, Portuguese, and other nations. The invention of paper formed of rags, by rendering books less expensive, and multiplying their copies, has also multiplied knowledge, and opened a road to a new revolution in the human mind. This must be accompanied by the discovery of spectacles just mentioned, not so much for the immediate utility afforded to mankind, as from having given rise to one far more surprising, that of telescopes; which have effected a new revolution in the heavens. It would appear that these discoveries have been made more by accident than by reasoning, at least not from that reasoning in fashion in the barbarous philosophy of these times. We must make a distinction between ignorance and error. The latter, as we have seen it dazzled with vain and obscure words, prevailed in the schools, and by a species of despotism enchained the understanding, which dared not to exceed the obscure limits prescribed it: Ignorance, by leaving minds in their natural liberty, permitted the extraordinary geniuses, which arise in all ages, to make use of their own power; and therefore, even when deprived of aid, they can take an unusual flight, frequently so much the more easily, because they are not oppressed by the girt of extraneous knowledge, which accustoms, and almost obliges, them to see with the eyes of others. This perhaps is the reason why barbarous ages can produce wonderful discoveries. But let us reduce all to its proper value. Of so many men celebrated by the superlative eulogies of the historians of their times, and by

the writers of literary history what remains? To them may be applied the judicious lines of Dante :

Ovana gloria dell' umane posse,
 Con poco verde in sulla cima dura,
 Se non è giunta dall' etadi grosse.

Their glory has passed away like the smoke, and the voluminous productions of lawyers, physicians, and philosophers are immersed in oblivion, with a few truths alone which have escaped it. There is no other method of weighing the merit of writers. Posterity judges of them without appeal : if we except the truly surprising discoveries we have mentioned, and a few truths, all the rest is either a dark void, or a series of quibbles or scholastical subtleties, neither instructive nor entertaining. The intellectual productions of the ages we have hitherto gone through, arrived only very partially at the first scope. The imagination was more successful in the second, as we are about to demonstrate.

BELLES LETTRES AND POETRY.

The Italian language, born some time ago, long remained in the mouths of the vulgar, little more than an interpreter of natural wants, demeaned by the name which it preserves, even to this day, of *vulgar**. The Latin, although grown old and strangely disfigured, still maintained its dignity, like an ancient and illustrious family, impoverished and decayed, and was made use of not only by the writers who sought for celebrity, but in the most common acts of life ; in contracts, and even in letters ; whilst the daughter that had not yet finished her education, was still stammering in her infancy.

* See what we have said upon the origin of this language, First Essay, tom. 2.

Finally, the latter too began to raise herself to the honour of being written, and the first lines probably were dictated by the muses. Ancient tradition or fable, attributed to love the origin of painting: I am more easily induced with Dante * to attribute the birth of Italian poetry to this passion—wherever there have been lovers, there have always been poets. The latter, wishing to express their soft sentiments clothed with the colours of imagination, and with harmony for the beautiful, it became necessary to abandon the Latin language, so foreign to it, and become a poet in the vulgar tongue. And hence from an amiable parent we have a daughter still more amiable. It would be very useless to make any research after the inventor of rhyme; the latter, which is become one of the most pleasing graces of Italian poetry, was shunned as a defect by the classic Latin writers; and if some ancient writer, and particularly Ennius †, at times delighted in making verses in rhyme, this was not one of the gems that Virgil drew from his impurities. The Latin verses were expressed with an harmony infinitely superior to that of the Italians; we perceive it ourselves and feel only a small part

* Vita nuova.

† Verses of Ennius, spoken by Cicero, Tusc. tom. 1.

*Hæc omnia vidi inflammari
Priamo vi vitam evitari.*

Also,

*Cælum nitescere, arbores frondescere
Vites lætificæ pampinis pubescere
Rami bacarum ubertate incurvescere.*

Varro, too, in the burial-place of Mænippus,
Neque orthophallica attulit psalteria,
Quibus sonant in Græcia dicteria, &c.

The learned have found the rhymes amongst the Greeks and Jews, if indeed accident has not sometimes fallen in with them, as in Virgil, Horace, &c.

of it, ignorant of the manner of pronouncing the Latin words poetically, and particularly the ballad, or the supports, which were given to the various positions of the syllables. The long and the short which we only hear of rarely, must have been heard by them *, and therefore there was some method of pronouncing them unknown to us; otherwise their rules, founded upon an imaginary convention would not have been so rigorously observed, because this were useless. From this pronunciation arose a melody unknown to us, and which was sufficient to give a pleasing flattery to the ear, by rendering the rhyme useless and even annoying. The Italian verse, on the contrary, is very far removed from the harmony of the Latin, expressed too by our imperfect pronunciation. The metre of the Italian approaches much to the prose †;

* There are Latin words, in pronouncing which we hear the long and the short, as in the middle of trisyllables. There are other cases, in which our ear perceives that a vowel must succeed a consonant, in order that the antecedent syllable may be short, and preserve its sound; as for example,

Et pecus et Dominum communio clauderet umbra, &c.

Every one perceives that the putting *silva* instead of *umbra*, would be a sin against the verse of prosody, but innumerable are the other cases in which our ear is not sensible of the long and the short. In all the first syllables and in the last of every Latin word, we do not feel the difference: the word itself varies its measure from the nominative to the ablative, from one signification to another. *Mala*, that may signify both mali, evils, and a fruit, and *la gota* varies the number of the first syllable, according to the signification. The Latins certainly felt those differences that escape us; otherwise we must say that the short and the long were the effect of a capricious convention, which cannot be imagined, since a very hard yoke would have been imposed for mere caprice, without harmony gaining by it; a yoke that the most sensible persons would finally have shaken off, because it was useless.

† In every book and at every page of Italian prose, if we pay atten-

it had need therefore of assistance by some other harmonic charm that might flatter the ear; and this it has found in rhyme. The birth of this was easy, having become so common in the barbarous Latin verses of lower times. The Latin verses were distinguished by metres and rhymes, the first written with the true rules of prosody, flattered the delicate ears used to Virgilian exactitude; the second sinned against those rules, and clothed only with a rough harmony, resembled the former in an imperfect ballad, which prose still enjoys*. The taste for the noble elegance of style, and the sensibility of the ear for the consonance of metre being lost, rough verses in rhyme, worthy of the harsh ears of barbarous nations, were used in degenerate Latin; and, in order both to wound, and shake more sensibly those rough organs, they made use of rhyme, a custom which, perhaps made more ample and extensive, but not invented by Leo in the eleventh century, gave them the name of Leonine verses †, which erred every moment against the rules of ancient prosody, because the pronunciation had been lost in the inundation of so many foreign tongues, which were everywhere heard. By these means they became verses by name, but prose in fact ‡, and had need of the aid of rhyme. Rhyme therefore easily went over, from the barbarous Latin to the Italian verse; and like a wild plant, which, when transplanted to

tion, we shall find not a few verses of every metre; in whoever speaks we observe the same, which shews how little our verse differs from the prose.

* Aristot. lib. 3. cap. 4. Rhet. Rhythmus habere oportet orationem non vero metrum, secus poema erit.

† Murat. Dissert. 40. Antiq. Ital.

‡ Donizone and many other poets of those barbarous times might say, like the Bourgeois Gentilhomme of Molière, that they had writt ɿ prose without knowing it.

a soil more adapted to it, grows gentle, and its fruits lose the bitter taste; so rhyme became one of the sweetest accompaniments of Italian poetry. In Italian words, the short and the long being only perceptible in verses of three or more syllables, and rarely so except in the penultimate, when they began poetry, they wrote harmonious verses and not metrical, whence they were called rhymes*. But who was the man, or what city or province was it which, having abandoned the bewildered roads of the Latin Parnassus, opened to itself a new one by beginning to make poetry in the vulgar tongue? who has substituted for the hexameter our verse of eleven syllables? The inventor deserves to be held in great esteem. The number and mechanism of the Latin verse hexameter, pentameter, and some other measures† was not much adapted to the Italian tongue, as experience has demonstrated in the useless attempt to introduce it at various times. The perception of this truth in those times; the invention of one that corresponds so well to the genius of the language, is a proof of great genius. Not only the inventor of this verse is unknown, but it is not decided, what nation has

* Antonio da Tempo has written : *Summa Artis rhythmicæ vulgaris dictaminis opera manus*, dedicated to Alberto della Scala Ann. 1332. Mur. Diss. 40.

† The Iambic verse of the Latins is that which most approaches to the Italian of eleven syllables, but the metre is different. The Latin *faleucio* corresponds very well to that which is called by us of eleven syllables : as

Lugete veneres, cupidinesque
Piangete o Grazie, piangete Amori.

There are also various lyric metres copied exactly from our poets, as far as the sound which we hear pronounces them, but never perfectly with respect to those short and long, which usually are not heard by us.

a right to claim the first idea of making poetry in the vulgar tongue, whether the Sicilians or the Provençals. The former have the authority of Petrarch in their favour, an authority of great weight*, since he was well acquainted with the poetry of Provence, he imitated them sometimes, and having lived no little time there, was well versed in Provençal literature. The Provençaux, therefore, have the fact for them, nor have we any Sicilian poetry so ancient as the Provençal†. In order not to lose time upon such a dispute, if we are to decide by proofs of fact, these are in favour of the Provençals; if with the authority of Petrarch, it is for the Sicilians. It is certain that the Provençal poets, who, under the glorious title of *Finders*, and the little honourable one of *Giullari*, merry-andrews or buffoons, were in great esteem at this time in Provence, scattered themselves through Italy; frequented the courts of princes, particularly on solemn festivals; recited or publicly sung their songs; sometimes even making extempore verses, and challenging each other to a poetic combat‡. From all which we infer the language of Provence to have been well understood in Italy, and that the Italian poets wrote in it, despising at the same time their own vulgar tongue. Among the many Italian poets, cultivators of the muses of Provence, Sordello the Mantuan is particularly distinguished, both as a poet and a knight-errant, and of him

* Pref. ad Epist. Famil.

† There are poems of William of Poitiers written at the beginning of the eleventh century, whilst of the Italian none can be shown until towards the end of the twelfth century.

‡ See Murat. Antich. Estens. tom. 2. A certain Mastro Ferrari is there spoken of as a celebrated improvisatore. The gracious reception given by Azzo VII, and his court to the poets of Provence, gave rise to many of such poems in praise of his daughters.

as such, we have the many warlike and amorous adventures related by Platina, by Nostradamus, and other writers, that we appear to read the romances of the royals of France, or of the Amadis. We have, however, very little certain knowledge of him*, from which we can infer him to have been a man of high importance, and much renowned for Provençal poetry. But whilst they were singing in Lombardy the rude verses of Provence†; in the fine climate of Sicily the muses made better progress, favoured as they were not only by that court, but singularly honoured by sovereigns, who disdained not to touch the poetic lyre, and to vie with the best poets of their times. Frederic II. was one of the greatest promoters of every kind of literature, that we have heard of‡. But the muses were particularly cultivated by him, and his sons Manfredi and Enzo; for the poetic fragments remaining of them, are still regarded with veneration. In order to be a Mecænas of the learned, it is necessary to appreciate merit by our own opinion, and not by that of others. Such were the sovereigns of Sicily. Their court became the centre of elegance, and the literature of Italy, and even of Europe §; the Sici-

* Rolandino, a cotemporary writer to Sordello, places the adventures within their just limits. From him is inferred that he was perhaps a relation of Ezzelino, who seduced his sister Cuniza from him, with other circumstances. Dante speaks of him in purgatory, as a man of high merit, mentions Cuniza in Paradise, and places her in the sphere of Venus for having passed through many amorous adventures. Benvenuto too, of Imola, speaks of Sordello in the same tone.

† In all the Provençal poetry of those times, either manuscript or printed, we only find, for the most, ideas very common and far-fetched opinions.

‡ Lib. 3. cap. 5.

§ That is so true, that the Florentine Harry of Settimello, no con-

lian dialect raised itself to a dignity, to aspire even to permanent superiority over all the others of Italy, and in which it would have succeeded, had unfortunate vicissitudes not taken place; and a court of the same taste had subsequently possessed that throne, exactly at the period of the development of the Italian language. Dante had presaged as much to the Sicilian language, little knowing that he himself was destined to be the principal destroyer of her reign *.

In many parts of Italy they had already begun to make the various dialects rudely pliant to the harmony of verse. It is not, however, precisely known, when and where they began to write in the perfect Italian language. The following inscription existed in the principal temple of Ferrara :

In mille cento trempa cinque nato
Fu questo tempio e a Zorzi dedicato
Fu Nicolao scoltore
E Glélmo fu l' autore.

Those who have undertaken to maintain that Italian poetry was begun only to be written later, will assert that the inscription was affixed to it in after-times, since it stands as an argument against them without the possibility of reply. But are they supported by good reasons? To us they appear very frivolous. The first is the inspection of characters already copied and preserved. Tiraboschi thinks they are not of those times; whilst Father Ireneo Affo thinks they are: the reader must determine his opinion from such good authority. Tiraboschi offers another argument, which he thinks stronger,

temptible Latin poet for those times, imitating Boetius, and making philosophy speak, makes her call her habitation in Sicily. *Mehus*, Vita Ambros. Camald. tom. 1. pag. 148.

* De Vulg. Eloq.

that is, that public documents were not written in those times in the Italian language. Here too he is in error: it is sufficient to mention one, written even before, which is found upon the Pisan Verrucola in a bastion towards the West: *Adi dodici Gygno m. c. III**, whence all arguments fall away; the inscription of Ferrara might also be of the time that it indicates, and those verses, although Italian, from the singularity of being the first, might have the honour of becoming a public document.

There is another celebrated inscription in Italian verses of Casa Ubaldini, of the times in which the Emperor Frederic I. came into Tuscany†. This is treated as apocryphal by Tiraboschi, because there is a mistake in the chronology, since it is stated in the inscription, that Frederic was in Mugello in the month of July 1184; and, on the other hand, the most exact chronologists think he only came there the year following. This is, indeed, a better objection, but whoever would wish to sophisticate, might say how easily chronology might have erred in those times of ignorance, and add, that John Villani himself fixes the arrival of Frederic in July 1184.

I wish I were able to maintain with arguments supported by good foundation, that the first ennobler of the vulgar Italian, who carried it to paper from the mouths of the common people, by imitating the Sicilians, was a Tuscan, Lucco Druso of Pisa; but the documents of this merit, so many ages later than the fact, and sup-

* Cav. Flam. dal Borgo Diss. 8. Under the year 1256 also, another ridiculous Italian inscription is mentioned as fixed on the confines of the Pisan states with the Genoese in spite of the latter, that is:

Scopa Boca al Zenoese
Crepa cuor all Porto venerese
Stuppa Borsello al Lucchese.

† Borghini Disc. p. 2.

ported upon a basis too unstable, leave, at least, a reasonable uncertainty in the mind of a prudent critic. The existence of that poet is founded upon the assertion of Pier Francesco Giambullari, who lived four centuries afterwards: in the book *The Origin of the Florentine Language*, he mentions a sonnet, supposed to be written by a certain Agatone Drusi to Cino of Pistoia, and communicated to her by one Peter Orsilag of Pisa. It is the following:

Se il grande avolo mio, che fu il primiero
 Che il parlar Sicilian giunse col nostro
 Lassato avesse un' opera d' inchiostro,
 Come, sempre ch' è visse, ebbe in pensiero;
 Non sarebbe oggi in pregio il buon Romiero,
 Arnoldo Provenzal, ne Beltram vostro
 Che questo de' Poeti unico mostro
 Teyria di tutti il trionfante Impero.
 Ei di Sentenzie, e di' amorosi detti
 Gli vinse, e di dolcissime parole
 Ma nell' invension vinse se stesso.
 Non Brunellesco o Dante sarian letti,
 Che la luce di questo unico sole
 Sola riluceria lungi e dappresso.

Many reflections here strike us. If this man rendered such signal service to Italian poetry, how has it happened that no one has spoken of those who have given the due praise to the ancient Italian poets, as Dante has done, Petrarch, and so many other writers? How is it that this "*de poeti unico mostro*" has been neglected by his contemporaries, and by so many other writers not much after him? How has the light of this only sun remained in obscurity? If the author of the Sonetto has not seen the poems of Lucius, lost at sea, how can he assert that if they had been preserved, their elegance was so great that Dante would be no longer read? After the supposed misfortune of those poems being lost when hardly

made, how did the Tuscans learn from him to make poetry? what has he done then? what do those words signify;

Il parlar Sicilian giunse col nostro?

Is is said: the Italian words finished with consonants, and he has instructed us to finish them with vowels, as the Sicilian; it is supposed without proof that they finished with consonants, although Drusi taught to finish them with vowels*. Has this same sonnet, which is adduced as foundation of the hypothesis, the stamp of the times of Messer Cino? Some think they discover in it a style more frank and less harsh than that which was then in vogue, and therefore a suspicion may arise that it is the work of lower ages. After all the reflections we have adduced, let the reader ask his own judgment, and make what conclusion it best dictates to him.

* There is every foundation to believe that the Latin words in changing into Italian, took immediately the termination in a vowel. Consult the map of the Archive of Lucca, which is in the eighth century, or at most, of the ninth, mentioned by us (First Essay tom. 2.) written with barbarous Latin in the same words, and Italian manner badly latinized, and we shall learn that the words finished from that time in vowels. The more we advance, the more we find the Italian language better formed, but composed of words that terminate in vowels, as we discover more clearly in a paper published by Ughelli (Ital. sacr. t. 9.) that belongs to the year 1122, where they treat of the confines of the estates of the Archbishops of Rossano. Therein are many rude Italian words terminating in vowels, as “la terra ad hirta esce per la ditta serra a Groinico e li fonti acqua trondente in verso torilliana, ed esce per dicto fonte allo Vallone de ursara, e lo Vallone apendino cala a lo forno, &c.” Radevico (Chronicle, and its continuation, lib. 2. c. 66,) relates that in the election of the Antipope Vittore, an. 1159, his partisans were heard to cry out: *Papa Vittore Santo Pietro lo elegge*, whence we perceive, in all the documents that remain, that the words of the Italian language terminated in vowels before the age of the supposed Drusi.

Of the Sicilian writers in vulgar poetry, the first whose verses have been handed down to us, is Ciullo of Camo. After him many are mentioned almost contemporary, and a long list of other rude Italian poets, who would acquire a singular celebrity, if really S. Francis of Assisi*, and his companion Friar Elias of Cortona, could be reckoned amongst them, as Friar Pacifico, his disciple, is mentioned, who being crowned a poet by Frederic II. from the profane muses, was called by the Saint to the Cloister, together with the two Kings of Sicily, Frederic II. and Manfredi, Enzo of Sardinia, and the renowned Peter of the Vineyards, Pier delle Vigne†. Tuscany, above all other countries, abounded in the thirteenth century with the first cultivators of the Italian muse. There is scarcely a city or a castle that does not enumerate some of them, Folcacchiero, Mico, Bartolommeo Maconi, &c., tempered the rude lyre in Sienna: Gallo or Galletto, Girolamo Tergmanino Pucciandone Martelli in Pisa: Meo Abbracciavacca in Pistoia; the Judge

* The spiritual songs attributed to him were written in prose, and turned into verse by some uncertain writer.

† Friar Pacifico was certainly one of the first Italian poets whilst he appertained to the age, and enjoyed even so great celebrity, as to be crowned by an emperor. San Francesco afterwards took him from Parnassus to the cloister, and his muse became silent. If this poet was not a saint, the blessed Jacopone of Todi was so, whose poems are still preserved. He sustained three different characters, in the world at various times, of poet, of clown and finally of saint, (See *il Crescim. Comm. della Poesia*, tom. 2. *Quadrio Ist. of poetry*, tom 2.) He wrote poems against Pope Boniface VIII, whence when the latter occupied Palestine, he condemned him to prison, before which the pope, passing one day, asked Jacopone when he would think of getting out; he answered: *when you will come in*, which was verified in a short time. His poetry, although very rough, bears test of the language.

Ubertino in Arezzo ; Folgore in S. Gemignano ; Terino in Castelfiorentino ; and this list might be extraordinarily lengthened, if genius and elegance were commensurate with the number *. But no city has furnished us with so long a list as Florence. All this proves how much the Italian muses, from their first birth, breathed with delicious pleasure the gentle gales of the Tuscan hills. Amidst this crowd of rising poets, we must distinguish some who were either cotemporaries or predecessors of Dante, and above the rest Ser Brunetto Latini, the son of Buonacorso of the nobles of Scarniano. According to the fashion of those times, he united the man of business with the literato ; to use the words of an ancient historian, he fashioned (*digrosso*) the Florentines, made them clever in speaking well, and taught them to guide and govern the republic according to the rules of policy † : he served his country by his talents in the various public employments he held ; the difficult times in which he lived, involved him in factions. He was a partisan of the Guelphan, which prevailed in Florence, and was sent as the most eloquent man in the year 1260, with other ambassadors to Alphonso, King of Castile, and Leo, elected king of the Romans, in order to invite him to come to Italy, and oppose Manfredi, the abettor of the Ghibellines. The fatal defeat of Monte Aperti broke up the embassy. Brunetto, with many others, was obliged to retire into France, where he wrote his *Tesoro* in the French language, which contains both precepts of morality and politics, philosophy and eloquence. These are like languid rays of light, which appear through a great obscurity ; it must not be forgotten that mention

* Vedi Crescimb. della volgare Poesia, tom. 3. Quadrio, &c.

† Gio. Vill. Stor. lib. 8. c. 10.

is made in them of the ship's compass, an invention which has been improperly believed to be of later date. The original *Tesoro* is not published, and we are only acquainted with the translation by Bono Giamboni. The *Tesoretto*, however, is a species of compendium of the *Tesoro*, written in Italian verses in rhyme, by Brunetto, whose imagination has imparted some animation to the cold moral precepts contained in the *Tesoro*. The author is therein feigned to have wandered into a wood, where he meets with Nature, who reasons with him upon all that can adorn the intellect and the heart: The translation of some fragments of Sallust, of the book of Invention of Tully and his Orations, have no other merit than what has been conceded to them by the time in which they are written, nor is it advisable for any person to read *Pantoffio*, in order not to diminish his esteem for this man. He returned, by the accustomed vicissitudes, to his native country, and was certainly the most learned man of his age. It is no small honour for him to have been the master of Guido Cavalcanti, and of Dante. He died in the year 1294, and a decent sepulchre in the Cloister of Santa Maria Maggiore attests the sense of gratitude his country entertained towards him*.

After Brunetto we must take notice of a few others, as Guido Guinicelli, although not a Tuscan but a Bolognese, in remembrance of the esteem in which he was held by Dante, Guido Cavalcanti, Friar Guittone of Arezzo, and Cino of Pistoia, who have been rendered illustrious, perhaps more by the verses of Dante than their own. The cause of the praises given by him to Guido Guinicelli, and, perhaps, through him to the

* Series of portraits of illustrious Tuscans.

Bolognese, is sought for in vain in his verses ; but he calls him his father and master, and rejoices so greatly at sight of his shadow, because at the touch of his cord, however slender, the poetic spirit of Dante, probably, which was still tender, awakened, began to beat the road of Parnassus ; and a kind of grateful veneration, sometimes even carried to excess, is preserved for our first masters. Greater sparks of poetic genius, however, appear in the songs of Guido Cavalcanti, a learned Florentine gentleman, acknowledged by Dante as superior to Guinicelli, who after having suffered too in the discords of his country, like Dante by exile, was enabled to return for a short time to finish his days in it*. These men are very much praised by Dante, but his own sense told him, that he was worth more than them, which, however that opinion may be expressed under a veil, that veil is nevertheless sufficiently transparent †. Friar Guittone of Arezzo not only deserves to be mentioned among the founders of Italian poetry, but as a man who has given rules and fashion to one of the most graceful compositions, viz., the Sonetto ‡ ; which, although on account of the rigid laws, within the confines of which it is limited, may be compared to the bed of Procrustes, innumerable Italian poets have been able to

* In his poetry Cavalcanti often celebrates Mandetta of Toulouse, with whom he probably fell in love in his pilgrimage to Saint James of Gallicia, spoken of by Dino Compagni. His song upon earthly love had an extraordinary celebrity, since Egidio Colonna, Maestro Dino dal Garbo, Jacopo Mini, Plinio Tonacelli, Pagolo del Bosco, &c. vied with each other in comments upon it ; celebrity which, perhaps, to modern readers, will appear excessive.

† Così ha tolto l' uno all' altro Guido

La gloria della lingua, e forse è nato

Chi l' uno e l' altro cascerà di nido.-- DANTE.

‡ Crescimb. Ist. dell. volg. Poes.

adapt themselves successfully to it; and it may be said that kind of poetry belongs almost exclusively to Italy, because our language boasts of so many graceful sonettos, and foreign languages so few. Friar Guittone was of the order of knights *Gaudenti*; knights, who instead of being the supporters of the punctilios of chivalry delicately ridiculous, professed the laudable institution of pacifying enemies, and restoring order and friendship to the cities which were divided by factions. From him we have the first letters, which were written in the Italian language: pious and devout, he was the founder of the Monastery of the Angeli of Florence. With the exception of those we have mentioned, all the numerous crowd of poets who were cotemporary with Dante, or came a little after him, is immersed in oblivion, whence they have been gradually snatched by the learned for a moment, in order to be displayed for a while, and immediately sink again into it.

In mouths such as these, vulgar poetry, which was still a child, stammered only rudely. Dante conducted her to the vigour of age, and proved himself capable of raising her to the dignity of a mother. We have shown at length, how much the Italian language was indebted to him for explaining its birth and progress*.

But we must detain our readers a little with a great and unfortunate man, and who appears to justify the saying of an illustrious philosopher, that when nature bestows, (and she does so rarely) sublimity of genius, she accompanies it with that anathema: *be a great man, and an unhappy one*†. Dante was born of a noble and

* Saggio primo, tom. 2.

† L' Alembert, Eloges de l'Académie Française.

ancient family in Florence; but not only considered this advantage of no importance, but contrary to the Gothic prejudices which then prevailed, was of opinion, that instead of deriving lustre from antiquity, families sink only into obscurity, if the descendants do not, from time to time, render them illustrious by noble exploits*; he, therefore, served his country as an excellent citizen, and shed lustre upon her by his works. Nature, in endowing him with the qualities necessary for a great poet, accompanied them with a mind extremely susceptible. Of this Dante gave even too early proofs, when, at the age of nine years, seeing a child, Beatrice of about his own age, the daughter of Folco Portinari, a Florentine citizen†, he became deeply smitten with love, which could hardly have been believed, had he himself not borne testimony of it in the beginning of the *new life*. From his singular manner in describing this event, we discover both the sensibility of his mind, and the heat of an extraordinary imagination. This love was fortunate for the Italian poetry, since it early awakened the muse of Dante, and directed it to write lyric verses for his mistress, which were a prelude to the great poem. In these youthful verses he showed himself alike superior to all who had preceded him, and to those with whom he lived; and whoever is practised in the lecture of the *Canzoniere* of Petrarch, will find no few traces of the

* He compares nobility to a cloak which is constantly growing shorter.—Parad. Cant. 16.

Ben se' tu manto, che presto raccorce,
Sicchè se non s'appon di die in die
Lo tempo va d' intorno colla force.

† He was founder of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. An. 1280.

thoughts and phrases of Dante*. This fervid love, which arises in gentle minds, not only prevented him not from following serious applications, but on the contrary impelled him to glorious achievements. He was particularly instructed by Ser Brunetto Latini; but Dante had little need of masters.

All the readers and commentators of Dante have been astonished, and have accused him of ingratitude, on account of his having condemned to hell his master

* For example the song 13 (ediz. of Venice dello Zatta) upon the death of Beatrice:

Ohimè! lasso, quelle trecce bionde,
Dalle quai rilucieno
D' aureo color li poggi d' ogn' intorno,
Ohimè! la bella cera . . .
Ohimè! il fresco ed adorno, &c.,

Is imitated by Petrarch in the Sonetto,

Ohimè il bel viso, ohimè il soave sguardo!

Of the Sonetto that begins,

Io maledico il dì, ch' io vidi in prima
La luce de' vostri occhii traditori,
E il punto, che veniste in sulla cima
Del core a trarre l' anima di fuori:
E maledico l' amorosa lima, &c.

We discover the same order in that of Petrarch,

Io benedico il mese, il giorno, e l' anno;

And to the Virgin,

Tu sai che in te fu sempre la mia speme.

In the first and second ballads too, which are very elegant, fine thoughts are imitated by Petrarch. The seventh is an imitation of the fable of the Book of Æsop with some happy variation.

The third Sonetto:

Ella mi ha fatto tanto pauroso,
Poesia ch' io vidi il mio dolce Signore, &c.

The other answers.

Dagli occhil della mia Donna si move
Un lume sì gentil, che dove appare
Si veggon cose, ch' uom non può ritrarre
Per loro altezza, e per loro esser nuove.
E da' suoi Raggi sopra il mio cuore piove
Tanta paura, &c.

Brunetto for an infamous crime; he has not certainly done so for the hatred he bore him, since, upon finding him in that place, he addresses him with tenderness:

Che in la mente m' è fitta, ed or m' accora,
 La cara buona imagine paterna
 Di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora,
 M' insegnavate come l' uom s' cterna;
 E quanto io l' abbia in grado fin' ch' io vivo
 Convien, che nella mia lingua si scerna*.

We can explain this in no other manner, but by supposing Brunetto to have been so defamed for that vice, that to put him elsewhere would have appeared a treason to truth; and, indeed, an expression of John Villani, with which, after a long eulogy, he tells us, *ma fue uomo mondano*, confirms us in the conjecture. Would it, however, not have been better for Dante to have left him in oblivion? Perhaps he thought it his duty in a work, in which he performed the office of Minos, and wherein he had undertaken to name the persons known to him, to judge him according to the universal opinion. With the character of a scrupulous follower and inflexible assertor of the truth, Dante might think that he would have been reproached for his silence by posterity, as paying an unnecessary adulation to his master, having already said,

E s' io del vero son timido amico,
 Temo di perder vita appo coloro,
 Che questo tempo chiameranno antico.

He cultivated his studies and served his country, both with his counsel and his sword, whenever it was necessary. In the bloody battle of Campoldino, in his twenty-fourth year, he fought valiantly, and found him-

* See, for the various quotations, the Version of Dante, by Cary, &c.

self in the greatest danger. The year following he lost his Beatrice in the flower of years, but he carried to the tomb her image engraven on his heart. He was employed in various embassies, and in one probably to Paris*. He devoted himself to studies in that university; and, if we are to give faith to Boccaccio, maintained public controversies there upon theology. He was raised to one of the first dignities of his country, the priorship; (priorato) which involved him in a long series of calamities, and imbittered the rest of his life. He held that office during the dangerous crisis of the factions of the Bianchi and Neri, when it was discussed whether King Charles, sent by the pope, should be received in Florence, who apparently came to appease discords, but in reality to expel the Bianchi. Dante, not only as an adherent to the party of the Bianchi, but because the good and peace of his country demanded it, maintained that he ought not to be received: but fraud and force prevailed so far, that he was received in the year 1301, and hence the many calamities which happened to the Bianchi, (and which are described in their proper place†. Dante, at that time ambassador to the pope, was sentenced to exile, and to the payment of a large pecuniary fine; and, as iniquity chose to assume a colour of justice, and wanted a pretext, he was, when absent, condemned on the 27th of January, 1302, for peculation, or trick, (baratteria) which he was supposed to have used in his office of priorato. We have seen with what little equity criminal trials were carried on in Florence‡. At the expiration of his term of office he had received the accustomed approbation; the sentence, therefore, on

* Vita di Dante. See Memorie, &c.

† Lib. 3. cap. 8.

‡ Lib. 3. cap. 8.

every account was unjust*. Not only the irregularity of the trial and the rage of party proved the iniquity of the sentence, but also the common opinion of posterity from the times of Dante to our own, which considered him as the victim of factions. From this period his unhappy life began. From the comforts of his home,—from the honourable situation of a principal citizen in one of the first republics of Europe, he became an exile, and was obliged to beg his bread† at the courts of princes and the powerful lords of Italy. Of a lofty character, which could not easily bend, and therefore ill adapted to please in such situations, it may be said he lived unhappily for the remainder of his days. Although he was received with kindness by many Italian princes, and particularly by the Scala‡, a guest of his character could not be long acceptable; the more so as he was possessed of so many transcendent merits, which eclipsed all the other courtiers

* This act of the comedy or the judgment and condemnation of Dante was found by Savioli in the archive of the reformations.

† He says so clearly in those verses, which he puts in the mouth of Caccia Guida (Par. c. 17.)

*Tu proverai sì come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui; e quanto è duro calle,
Lo scendere e salir per l'altrui scale.*

‡ Critics give themselves great trouble to adjust the chronology of the various asylums of Dante. It is agreed, from the documents of his actions we are in possession of, that he was received by the Marquis Morello Malespina, and that he afterwards went to the court of the Lords Scala; but, if that is true, how could his predecessor, Caccia Guida predict to him, (Par. c. 17.)

*Il tuo primo refugio, il primo ostello
Sarà a la Cortesia del gran Lombardo,
Che in sulla scala porta il santo uccello.*

The knot can be solved in no other manner than by interpreting that Dante wished to signify the principal for the first,—that is, where he met with the longest and most splendid reception.

in learning and talents, leaving them at an immense distance behind him,—a superiority which it is either necessary to have the art of concealing, or obtain a pardon for by great humility, and sometimes meanness,—qualities which never formed a part of the character of Dante*. Having abandoned the court of the Lords Scala, this unfortunate man went wandering through Italy, begging an asylum†; was honourably received every where, and finally terminated an unhappy career in Ravenna, under the protection of the Princes Polenta‡. He is said to have put on the religious habit of San Francesco, in the quality of Terziario, as probably he had taken it and laid it down in his youth§. Time, which extinguishes hatred,

* The hatred and the esteem of the courtiers at the same time towards Dante are discovered in that indiscreet interrogation of Cane to Dante, and in the bitter answer of the latter mentioned by Petrarch. (Rer. Memor. lib. 4.) Cane asks him one day, What was the reason of a silly buffoon, who was at his court, being beloved by all, and of himself, who was every where acknowledged as a great man, being hated by all? Dante frankly replies, that it was no wonder, since love and friendship arise from a similarity of character. The interrogation demeaned Dante; the answer debased them all. It would be difficult to determine on what side the indiscretion was greatest. It is easy to see that, after such a reply, the court of the Scala could be no longer an habitation for Dante.

† These journeys of Dante and his various asylums may be read in many books, but particularly in the studied documents upon the Life of Dante of the most learned Signor Pelli, in the *Hist. Lett. of Tirab., &c.*

‡ He was born in 1265, and died in 1321, therefore at the age of fifty-six.

§ That Dante put on the religious habit of San Francesco in his youth is attested by a Commentor, Buti, who wrote only seventy years after Dante,—whence his assertion is of some weight. Young men, and particularly those endowed with a warm fancy, frequently embrace such a resolution. Mr. de Segrais called this passing fervour, the small-pox of the spirit.

and places great men in their proper place, made the Florentines perceive the injustice they had committed; they often endeavoured, but in vain, to get possession of his bones: perhaps his shade, if it had been invoked, would have said as Scipio,—*Ungrateful country, thou shalt not possess my ashes.*

During his exile he wrote the greater part of his sublime work, the “Divine Comedy;” as Milton during his blindness and misfortune wrote the “Paradise Lost.” The great undertaking, however, according to the best conjectures, was begun in Florence. Many writers have chosen to deny this city, as the cruel step-mother of Dante, the glory of having exhaled the sublime thought, and the first lofty ideas. Among these, the Marquis Maffei is distinguished, who, from the great greyhound (Veltro) having been nominated in the first canto, by him interpreted for dog (cane), Scala, believes that the compliment was made in gratitude for the benign reception he had experienced, and therefore infers that the same canto first was written after the exile; as if he could not have praised his generous disposition, even before he had enjoyed his hospitality. Others noted, that in the sixth canto, Ciacco predicts to him the expulsion of the Bianchi, in which he was involved. Upon this article it becomes necessary to make one important observation. It not rarely happens in large works, that poets, after having finished them, or at least being very far advanced in them, turn over them, and either take away or add whatever thoughts they think opportune; such as compliments, or prophecies. Boileau, when he was angry, or was reconciled again, with any author, either inserted, or took away, his name from his satires. It is therefore impossible, in the Dittamondo of Fazio of the Uberti, to adjust the chronology without this sup-

position*. Whoever had the manuscript before Dante, knows how many of these additions might be taken notice of. The compliment paid to the great greyhound, the prophecy of Ciacco, and that of Farinata, are probably subjoined afterwards. A fact, which has not the appearance of being subsequently added, is the question made in the tenth canto by Cavalcante, if his son is alive; the affirmative answer that Dante gives Farinata, (although the other has not the patience to wait for it), appears to prove clearly, that when Dante wrote the sixteenth canto, Guido Cavalcanti was alive: he died before the exile of Dante, that is, in 1300, as John Villani notes; it remains, therefore, proved, that in the time of his exile, the poet had arrived at least at the tenth canto, and perhaps beyond it. There is no reasonable proof that Cavalcanti was dead, and that Dante feigns him alive: this passage, therefore, proves that the poem was begun in Florence. The authority of Boccaccio, too, is of some weight, who was born before the death of Dante, who attests it having been related to him by Andrea di Leone Poggi, cousin of Dante, that he had given Dino Lambertuccio Frescobaldi the first seven cantos to read, which, probably, were those he had purified. Nor far distant from that age, comes Franco Sacchetti, who relates to us the anecdote of the whim of Dante, and in what manner he took revenge upon that mechanic, who crippled his verses by singing them as a vulgar song, (novelle 114); an anecdote which must have been commonly known. The *Vita Nuova* was written by Dante in Florence, before his exile, immediately after the death of Beatrice, as we infer from the same: now we discover here,

* Tiraboschi, Ist. della Lett. tom. 5.

either that he had begun to write, or at least to conceive, the vast subject in the first canzone, which begins :

Donne che avete intelletto d'amore,

feignng the blessed to ask of God, that he may be pleased to adorn Paradise with the soul of Beatrice,

Lo cielo, che non ha altro difetto

Che d'aver lei, al suo signor la chiede.

God answers :

Diletti miei, or sofferite in pace,

Che vostra speme sia quando mi piace :

Là ora è un, che perder lei s'attende

"E che dirà nell' Inferno ai malnati,

"Io vidi la speranza de' beati :"

consequently the poem at that time was either already begun, or the contexture thereof was at least conceived. The learned canon Dionigi, so well deserving of the Divina Commedia, has proved with the most elaborate erudition, that Dante did not repair to Verona until after the year 1311. He died in 1320 : and is it to be supposed that so great a work was begun so late, and so early finished*? From all which, it appears undoubted that, at the epoch of the exile of Dante, the poem not only was already begun, but even very far advanced.

But let us employ our time rather with the magnificent work, than the circumstances which produced it. Nothing is more useless, says a great English writer, making observations upon the Paradise Lost, than disputes about name ; therefore, leaving aside the question, why Dante should have called *Commedia* †,

* Serie d'Anedd. &c. Sagg. di critica upon Dante.

† Dante in his book *de Vulgari Eloquentia*, distinguishes three sorts of style : *per Tragedium Superiorem stylem induimus ; per comediam inferiorem, per elegiam stylum intelligimus miserorum* : whence it is inferred that he entitled his poem *Comedy*, having intended to write

what others would call poem, it is sufficient to observe, that we meet therein with beauties of imagination, and grandeur of style, equal to those of Homer, of Virgil, or any other great poet. Sublime geniuses are inventors, and not the servants and the imitators of others. Of this kind we have only five or six chefs d'œuvre, or great narrative poems. Homer has written the *Iliad*, not with that regularity a cold critic would wish: the modest and timid Virgil has imitated him, tempering with more reason the lesser fire of his fancy, and making amends for a strength he is sometimes deficient in by a softness and mildness of colouring which is always agreeable to the eye. Critics, observing those poems, have written rules, and said to other poets, "Here are the traces upon which you ought to walk; the limits which you ought not to exceed." But Dante, Ariosto, and Milton, were not born to be confined within limits, and follow servile traces. Born to be creators, they have beaten new roads, and have succeeded in making themselves the admiration of posterity. They have obtained the end: the means, therefore, were excellent; they were created by nature legislators of taste, and were not subjected to the petty laws of critics; laws, which have never produced any chef d'œuvre. The more numerous the roads are, which lead to the great end of delighting and instructing mankind, so much greater does the fecundity of nature display itself. These reflections are the goal, to which, after so many discussions upon the divine comedy, *Orlando Furioso*, and the *Paradise Lost*, we must finally return. The poem of Dante resembles not in design, any either

in the middle style. This observation, which is attributed to Marquis Maffei, had been made by Tasso upon reading the Sonetto of Casa:

Questa vita Mortal, &c.

ancient or modern ; it is the original poetic invention of a great and new design, wherein it is not necessary to seek for regular composition with the critical compass of an Aristotle, but nature, sometimes rude and wild, displays herself greater, because she is free to develope all her power, and is not choaked by art. Let us figure to ourselves the Alps, which, covered with rugged rocks, precipitate torrents, with woods and hills, present us with one magnificent horror ; we meet with, it is true, naked and barren spots, thorns, and brambles, intermixed with wild plants ; but the size and stem of the latter, prove the extraordinary vigour of vegetation. In the midst, too, of this rude and savage grandeur, we meet at intervals with agreeable hills, smiling valleys, and verdant meadows clothed with a lively and perpetual green, with the colours of spring scattered over them. This is no regular garden, cut in parallel lines at right angles, the one half of which appears to reflect as in a glass the other half, where trees, foreign to the soil, are badly nourished by an earth their step-mother, and obliged to assume whimsical shapes, discovering a forced art and a general inferiority to the irregular, but grand, picture of nature.

Under this point of view we must contemplate the Divine Comedy. What more magnificent can be imagined, than the design of a poem, in which a lively imagination expatiates through the three kingdoms, which religion shews to be destined to men after death ? The work is consecrated to religion and morality.

What Christian poet has given to Christian virtue a more venerable and august character, and struck more terror into the guilty ? It cannot be denied that the gall of satire is not often felt in this sacred work, but it is rather a zealous detestation of the vice, upon which it

thunders, like a minister of the Gospel from the pulpit. Some will think that zeal is carried sometimes beyond its limits, which descends to personalities; but Dante, in treating so serious a subject, considered himself a minister of heaven, destined to exercise a rigorous justice. And in truth does the history of those times, and of the persons condemned by Dante, belie it? It is necessary too to pardon him for some lash of satire on account of his misfortunes. Every author of taste, scatters over his productions a tint of the state of his mind and his heart. That of Dante, which was so much sore, often exhaled its bitterness in his verses. This desire of giving vent to his heart, leads him sometimes to minute details of persons, of families, and of facts, which greatly interested the readers of those times; but in proportion as we are removed from them, the interest being diminished, we become either indifferent to, or are nauseated by them; and perhaps in the first times those were most greedily tasted. Although a rigid observer of the dogmas of religion, and endowed with

Di dignitosa coscienza e schietta,

A cui è piccol fallo amaro morso,

he has arrogated to himself a liberty in assigning particularly in hell, the various degrees of punishment to men, which cannot be approved, perhaps, by the most severe orthodox; and the philosophical compassion with which, in tempering the inflexible rigour of theology, he has chosen to respect the virtues of some Pagan heroes, placing them indeed in a place of damnation, but deprived of the pain of sense, and Cato between the confines of purgatory and hell, as the keeper of the pass, will be blamed by many*. He is, however,

* Has imitated Virgil, lib. 6.

Secretosque pios his Dantem jura Catonem.

every where a religious adorer of the mysteries of the faith; he highly condemns those, who, instead of adoring them in silence, have the profane boldness to question them, as may be seen in the following terzettos :

Matto è chi spera, che nostra ragione
 Possa trascorrer l' infinita via,
 Che tiene una sustantia in tre persone.

And again,

E tu dicevi: un uom nasce alla riva
 De l' Indo; e quivi non è chi ragioni
 Di Cristo, nè chi legga, nè che scriva.

The design of the poem, as we have said, is new, the features are bold, but grand, and sometimes inimitable. It has been said of Buonarroti, that by the certain frankness of his hand he has expressed features, which no other man would have ventured to imitate, because he was not certain, like him, of the success of execution. The same may be said of Dante;—the horrid attitudes of those who are condemned to eternal punishment, the fierce complexion of Ugolino, that of Lucifer, and many other such pictures, if they had been executed with weakness, instead of a sublime horror, would excite our ridicule. Even the furies, lively expressed; the horrible skull of Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci; penetrate us with a delightful horror. If the song of Hell particularly resembles in design the Universal Judgment of Michael Angelo, we find the same conformity also in the colouring of the latter, which, being strong, and somewhat deep, is better adapted to express grand and sublime ideas than the softness and sweetness of the most genteel painters. Dante, however, is not without suavity of style; and this chord, which has afterwards done so much honour to Petrarch, was not wanting to his cittern, which, from time to time, appears still more acceptable from its variety. The pathetic images in the

doleful history of the two brothers-in-law in hell, are expressed with a sweetness, which forms a contrast to the strong and powerfully sublime style in which the atrocious history of Ugolino is recounted; but more frequent examples are found in the other two songs, which are better fitted to the subject*. It is necessary, therefore, to seek the roses in the midst of the thorns. There are readers, who, too hastily tired with the harshness of the verses, with the obscurity of expressions, and images which are sometimes a little vulgar, (since for what reason are we to deny that such defects are not frequently met with?) abandon the lecture and judge him too lightly for a poet, whose merit consists in the imagination of his adorers. "It is easy," says a great English poet, "to perceive the defects of a writer; the straw, the froth, the filth of the sea, are borne swimming to us, but we must go deep into it in order to fish for the pearls." Dante was the most learned man of his times, and the learning of the age is found diffused over his poem. To the unhappiness of those times we must ascribe the scholastic subtleties, either philosophical or theological, which he has endeavoured to clothe with poetic embellishments; but, in the midst of that dark philosophy, truths sometimes shine forth worthy of our age, some of which we will now take notice of.

The description, in a *terzina*, of the formation of rain, together with its poetic merit, appears to explain, with all precision and clearness, the theory of the solution and precipitation of water produced in the air by heat and

* The purgatory is full of fragments of such a style, which this is not the place to detail minutely: they must be sought for. The canto twenty-eight is sufficient for an example. It is full of smiling images, and written in a style as sweet and soft, as could have been used by Petrarch.

cold, and that he has guessed at the theory of *Le Roi*, which has been embraced by moderns:

Tu sai, come nell' aer si raccoglie
Quell' umido vapor, che in acqua riede,
Tosto che giunge dove freddo il coglie.

The theory of the formation of the secondary Iris is truly false, but is happy; and its being known to Dante, shews his application to philosophical studies:

Come si volgon per tenera nube
Due cerchi paralleli, e con colori
Quando Junone a sua ancella jube,
Nascendo da quel dentro quel di fuori
In guisa del parlar di quella vaga,
Che Amor consunse, come il sol vapori:

Where may be noted a defect in truth; that is, one similitude created in order to explain another, the echo to explain the secondary Iris, already destined to explain another idea; but from this very defect we deduce the fertility of his fancy, around which the images assemble in crowds. The transformation of worms into butterflies, is one of the rarest gems, fabricated by genius, by fancy, and by religion; it being imagined by him that the human body, which clothes the soul, is nothing but a worm or chrysalis:

Non v' accorgete voi che noi siam vermi
Nati a formar l' angelica farfalla?

Other proofs may be given of the sublime genius of Dante, in guessing at the mysteries of nature, where the attentive observation has supplied the want of intermediate facts. Only after the optic experiences of Newton have we become acquainted with the various refrangibility of the rays of light, and among them the red is the latest to break and to reflect; consequently, it is the last that is lost in a luminous object, which appears red

across an air charged with vapours, because all other kind of rays, broken and reflected, have remained behind, and the red alone arrives at the eyes. The cause of great vapours by this effect is exactly given by Dante :

Ed ecco qual sul presso sul mattino
Per gli grossi vapor Marte rosseggia
Già nel ponente sovra il suol marino.

It is certain that air, extraordinarily hot, must excite a turbulent wind, by the cold air running in opposition to it, in place of the hot, as the learned Franklin demonstrates (Letters, &c.), and see how Dante expresses himself :

E già venia su per le torbid' onde
Un fracasso d'un suon pien di spavento,
Per cui tremavan ambidue le sponde:
Non altrimenti fatto, che d'un vento
Impetuoso per gli avversi ardori
Che fier la selva senz' alcun rattento
Gli rami schianta, abbatte frondi e fiori
Dinanzi polveroso va superbe
E fa fuggir le fere ed i pastori.

This spirit of observation, as it has caused him to guess at physical truths, so it has made him paint graceful novelties and small circumstances in the picture of nature, which great poets alone are capable of discerning and describing. The following are a few examples of this :

E come dentro a loro schiera bruna
S'ammusa l'una coll' altra fornica,
Forse a spiar lor via e lor fortuna.

And elsewhere,

Come di un stizzò verde, ch' arso sia
Dall' un de' lati, che dall' altro geme,
E tiglia per vento che va via ;
Tal dalla scorza rotta esciva insieme
Parole, e sangue, ond' io lasciai la cima
Cadere, e stetti, come l' uom che teme.

This similitude has been imitated by Ariosto ; but, although this poet in poetical similitudes, may be compared with Dante above all others, the copy is very inferior to the original*. In this kind, Dante has few rivals amongst the poets of any nation, either ancient or modern ; his finest similitudes are generally known. We will only relate the celebrated one of the sheep, or of the mountaineer or tailor, &c., and we will only say, that in mentioning that wonderful one of the first canto of hell :

E come quei, che con lena affannata
Escito fuor del pelago alla riva,
Si volge all' acqua perigliosa, e guata,

Sufficient attention has not been paid to the verse that follows, viz :

Così l' animo mio, che ancor fuggiva, &c.

A verse highly expressive of the situation of mind of a person who having escaped, by flying, from a danger, speaks of flying again.

Galileo, a reader and admirer of Dante, might have drawn from him the hypothesis, that the light of the sun, mixed with the humour of the vine, is transformed into wine : this thought, however, so full of imagery, is more fitted for a poet than a philosopher :

E perchè meno ammiri la parola
Guarda il calor del sol, che si fa vino,
Giunto all' umor, che dalla vite cola†.

This is an article upon which it is more difficult to finish than to begin ; it is therefore time to put a stop to it, having already perhaps gone beyond our proper limits. We may conclude that this poetic work, upon which five

* Canto 6.

† Dante Purg. cant. 25. v. Magalotti Lett. Scien. lett. 5., Redi, tom. 5. page 135. ediz. di Nap.—Note al Ditirambo.

ages have stamped the seal of immortality, great and wonderful as it is in our days, was infinitely more so for those in which it was written. The applause with which his Divine Comedy was received is attested by the various cities wherein pulpits were erected, from which it was expounded. Boccaccio was paid for that purpose by the Florentine Republic, afterwards Antonio Padovano, and Philip Villani, &c. In Bologna, Benvenuto of Imola, became a public lecturer upon it in 1375, to whom we are indebted for one of the most interesting comments upon the Divine Comedy. In Pisa, Francesco of Bartolo da Buti, in 1386, author too of a commentary, and in many other cities out of Tuscany, from which we infer the merit in which it was universally held. Who would believe that in spite of a continued succession of historians and commentators, Father Arduino dared to do with Dante what he had done with some classic authors, denying that he was the author of the Divine Comedy, and attributing it to an impostor? It is not necessary to enter into serious dispute with such a man, who, upon being asked why he took upon himself to maintain such extravagancies, replied, *Est-ce que vous croyez que je me lève toujours à trois heures pour répéter les choses dites par les autres?* It is necessary, however, for the young poets who study Dante, in order to form their style, to remember two things, which, in composing the Divine Comedy, formed the poetic language, and which attempted various ways of speaking, and that five ages have elapsed since that work was written; whence, although the greater part of the phrases have received the sanction of posterity, many have gone out of use, a capricious lord sometimes, but nevertheless master of languages, and many as it were have withered after this long lapse of time. The other works of Dante, either in

verse or in prose, are far from possessing the merit of the Divine Comedy. Among these the *Vita Nuova* is made to celebrate the beautiful Beatrice; but her timid, delicate and metaphysical love expressed in weak prose, mixed with middling verse, cannot much entertain our readers. His *Convivio*, so called as an instructive food to readers, is a comment upon three of his songs, in which we discover his extensive knowledge in the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato, and in astronomy; knowledge of great weight in those times, and useless in our own. More particular attention should be paid to his other two works one of *Monarchy*, the other of *Vulgar Eloquence*. In the first, the primacy of the imperial authority is maintained over the pontifical: an opinion which placed all his writings in danger of undergoing ecclesiastical censures. As he was of the Ghibelline party, he certainly ought not to have favoured the pontifical prerogatives; but, separating from all spirit of party, if true religion and reason had been attended to, such disputes would not have taken place; since, if the pope is considered as head of the church, no secular power can interfere in what respects the dogmas of religion, which belong to him to decide upon; if as a secular prince, he is in the rank of other sovereigns, and becomes subjected to the same principles of public right. But the confounding the spiritual with the temporal primacy, has given origin to endless scandal, and has terminated in being fatal to whoever has abused it. The good sense of Dante, too, has diffused over his poem various traits against this abuse. He had not failed to fulminate his poetic censure against the false decretals, and make St. Peter speak a language the most severe against his successors and their ministers. Nor is it easy to understand how his frequent and terrible invectives against the court of Rome

and the ecclesiastical senate, have escaped the pontifical censure. Perhaps the daring declamations have been pardoned in the poetry, because it has the credit of diffusing more fable than truth: those poetical philippics have been regarded as satires, which, in every age, have enjoyed the privilege of a liberty or license of telling harsh truths, which the powerful if not particularly mentioned, are accustomed to pardon (because self-love makes an exception to each) or listen to injuries with a smile, like the ancient Romans at their servants in the Saturnal festivals. Perhaps too, the veneration which the divine poem immediately excited, in which the author, as we have noted, appears more as a minister of the divine word than a poet, caused them to be tolerated, as we tolerate great truths, even when they are harshly told from the pulpit. The *Book of the Monarchy*, however, incurred this risk for a moment, but soon fell into oblivion. The work worthy of most consideration is that of *Vulgar Eloquence*, as it contains the sentiment of Dante upon the nature of the vulgar tongue, and what is the noblest in Italy that should be followed, he does not give the privilege to any city, not even to Florence; but says that this is a language, according to his expressions, *illustre, cardinale, aulica, cortigiana, che non è propria d'alcuna città d'Italia ma può appartenere a tutte**. This opinion of Dante, perhaps, was just in his days; the noble Italian language was fluctuating, because

* This pamphlet, already mentioned as a production of Dante, by Boccaccio, Villani, by Leonard Aretino, by Filelfo, having appeared translated into Italian at a time when controversies were boiling (in the year 1529), upon the name which was proper for our language, whether Italian or Tuscan, was thought apocryphal by Doni; but since Pietro del Bene, a Florentine, found the Latin text at Padua, and that it was printed at Paris by means of Corbinelli, they have no longer doubted of its authenticity.

not yet well formed ; but after his divine work, after Petrarch and Boccaccio, who still more established that which Dante had begun, the prerogative of belonging to a particular country was decided in favour of Tuscany. If it may be said that Dante thought differently, and that he did not intend to write in the Tuscan dialect, it might be answered that perhaps he thought so theoretically, but in fact wrote in it: that having imbibed it with his milk, it always accompanied him, and, without his perceiving it, practised upon him an elegant fraud, in sinuating itself tacitly into his writings, and as it were guiding his pen ; otherwise, how could it be explained, that the Tuscan dialect is made use of in preference in the Divine Comedy and in all the other works with few exceptions ?

Next to Dante, if we wish to search for the splendour and glory of Italian poetry, we must go on to Petrarch. There are other cotemporary poets with Dante, as Francesco, of Barberino of Val di Elsa of that family, which having ox flies for their arms, converted them into golden bees, when adorned with the pontifical diadem*. He was a lawyer, judge, or notary by profession†, but cultivated the muses, and wrote the *Documents of Love* in various metres. The work, however, instead of treating of profane love, as might be inferred from the title, contains only precepts of morality and virtue, and rewards for them. The style is harsh and rude, and savours

* Upon the ancient house, Barberini of Val d'Elsa, there is a rude coat of arms of stone with ox-flies. There is a tradition, that before establishing themselves in Barberino, that family inhabited a place not far off, called Tofania, where there are estates belonging to them, among which is the field called " de Tofani."

† Mehus, Vit. Amb. cam. t. 1. Lami Nov. Lett. Magg.

strongly of the Provençal*. Coteremporary with Alighieri was another Dante, called of Magana. It is a great misfortune for the latter to have a common name with one who has rendered it so illustrious; and which, on that account, cannot be placed by the side of it without being obscured. He enjoyed, however, great merit in his time, and the graceful Sicilian poetess, the Nina, gave her heart to him without seeing him, from being charmed with the verses he sent her. After Dante and his successor, but at an immense distance, comes Fazio Uberti, the nephew probably of the magnanimous Farnata, to whom Florence owes her existence†. An exile on account of factions from his native country, and reduced to misery, he frequently sung, as a jester, ballads and rondels at the courts of the princes of Italy‡. But his work of greatest merit, is that called the *Detta-mondo*, in which he has attempted to imitate Dante, wandering through the world in company with Solino, and making a description of it, as Dante, in company with Virgil and Beatrice, had run through the three kingdoms. We find in it the stiffness of Dante's style, compensated by few beauties§.

We have already spoken of Cino of Pistoia in the series of lawyers, although his celebrity has been handed down to us as an elegant poet. The scarcity, however, of his poetry makes it unnecessary to say much about him. It is proper to mention in his company Sennuccio

* It is, however, one of the texts of language. Other works are also mentioned of him.

† Vide lib. 3. cap. 5.

‡ Filipp. Vill. Mazzuch. Quadrio, &c.

§ Here we are not giving the history of poets, but only of the progress of the art; the reader, therefore, will not wonder that so many of them are left behind.

del Bene, a Florentine, on account of the friendship he maintained with Petrarch, and from being known for some pieces of poetry. He was also involved in the misfortunes of so many Florentine great men in the revolution of 1301.

Leaving all these poets of mediocrity, half immersed as they are in oblivion, who are remembered only by the curious learned, and whose existence has been handed down to us because they had the good fortune to write at a period in which language was first made so respectable to posterity,—the greatest poet that presents himself to us, after the times of Dante, is Francis Petrarch. His father, Petracco, a notary of Florence, was involved in the same misfortune as Dante, and, together with him, obliged, upon abandoning his country, to take shelter in Arezzo in the year 1302, with Eletta Carnigiani, his wife, where Francis was born in 1304. The unfortunate vicissitudes of this family, which were common to the other exiles, was the occasion of their wandering, and finally fixing themselves in Avignon. Francis was intended by his father for the study of the law; but nature, with whom none can contend, and which, like in Ovid, and afterwards in Ariosto and Tasso, and in many others, opened the road also to Francis through a thousand obstacles, urged him irresistibly on to the cultivation of the pleasing studies to such a degree, that the father, when one day in a passion, threw all the fine productions of his son into the fire; but, softened by his tears, saved his Virgil and the Rhetoric of Cicero from the general condemnation. Upon the death of his father, he gave himself up entirely to Belles Lettres. All that can constitute the delight of a genius formed by nature for such pursuits,—erudition, eloquence, philosophy, morality, became the sole object

of his attention. He well knew how to cull the roses amidst the thorns, with which knowledge was at that time surrounded, and to extract the brilliant gems from a confused heap of unpolished matter.

But what renders him most interesting to us at present is the poet. Although the vulgar tongue was already in esteem, particularly after Dante, nevertheless the Latin still unhappily preserved its dignity; and Petrarch, a diligent researcher of the ancient Latin classics, and their judicious admirer, venerated that language too greatly, and endeavoured to form his style from it, both in verse and in prose. Having conceived the idea of an epic poem, he wished to write it in Latin. The ideas that he was continually revolving in his mind, of the great enterprises of the Roman heroes, made him turn his imagination to one of the most glorious epochs of the Roman republic, that is, to the second Carthaginian war; and he wrote his poem of *Africa*. At this time the poem upon the same subject by Silius Italicus was unknown, who was probably the weakest of the ancient epics*. Petrarch employed much time and study in writing a poem, which really procured him the crown in the capitol; but

* Of him Pliny has said *scribebat carmina majore cura quam ingenio*. Tiraboschi, a very learned man, but endowed rather with learning than fine taste, thinks that wrong is done Silius, in apprizing him less than Lucan and Statius, giving for reason thereof that the defects of the last are covered with a deceitful appearance of majesty, grandeur, and enthusiasm. He is deceived. Lucan, for example, has certainly great defects, but also great and true beauties; and has made heroes speak with dignity. It is true that his style has a tint that often offends the eyes; but the thoughts are great, and Cæsar, Pompey, and Cato, speak the true language of the Roman heroes; hence the reasons that cause him to be preferred to Silius, and for which he was so much esteemed by the great Peter Cornelio, who was an excellent judge.

which was destined to fall into oblivion. One opportune reflection here occurs to us. Let us consider the trouble he has given himself in that work ; behold him at the time in which so many aids were not at hand to write in that language ; torturing his mind to discover expressions which he had not yet found in the classics ; abandoning and often resuming his work for this motive, omitting fine images because he could not find colours, whereby he could express them with dignity ; and, finally, let us examine his poem, the style of which is very far from that of the golden age. We shall admire him for what he has been able to do ; and he will appear before us like a robust horse, which has made a long march with the fetters at his feet. We cannot do less, however, than lament the loss of time, and complain that he had not rather given it to the Italian poetry, seeking to bring it to perfection, and instead of adorning a dead person with charms, and making it move, and throw itself in the attitudes of a living one, he had not rather given himself every care to ornament the living daughter with new grace. It is certain that, if the useless cares he employed in the Latin heroic verse, had been devoted by a man of his fine imagination and sublime ideas to the Italian poetry, he would have highly enriched it. The fancy of Dante had contemplated matters which are out of the human sphere. The pictures of Scipio, of Hannibal, of Hamilcar, the battles of Zama, the unfortunate vicissitudes of Sophonisba, in Italian verses, proceeding from the imaginations of Petrarch, might from those times have formed an Italian model of the heroic style. He, however, suffered himself to be transported by the veneration in which his age still held the language of the Scipios, and thought their actions alone were to be sung in it. Accident, that often directs the actions of the greatest men,—and love,

that caused Dante to make poetry in the vulgar tongue, awakened also the Italian muse of Petrarch. Madonna Laura is too well known to make it necessary for us to say much about her. Born in a suburb of Avignon*, of Odiberto of Noves in the year 1308, and married to Ugo de Sades in 1325; she awakened in the sensible heart of our poet a strong and stable amorous passion, meeting with him in the year 1327 in the church of Santa Chiara in Avignon on Holy Monday; minute and trifling circumstances, but which are rendered important from this passion, having given rise to the most tender poetry known in our language. The opinions upon the beauties of Laura have been various: some boasting of her as a Venus, whilst others maintain she was superfluously embellished by the fancy of the poet. Be this as it may, her name has descended, together with the verses of Petrarch, to immortality. Profane love becomes divine in these rhymes, because it is clothed with the modest graces of Plato. This illustrious Greek, in whom a lively fancy prevailed over his reason, has formed a system very adapted to be expressed by poetic colouring. Souls, daughters of the heaven, inhabitants of the stars come from them to inform the bodies, and the time being over prefixed for mortal life, they return to their sphere, and admiring the merits of a fine soul, and the graceful dress, in which it is concealed, we admire at the same time the great works of the Creator, to whom we lift ourselves up from those

Chi son scale al Fattor chi ben le mira.

The countenance and the eyes of a fine woman shew the way of heaven, and infuse into us the ideas of celes-

* Ed or d' un picciol borgo un sol n' ha dato.—*Part 1. son. 4.*

tial pleasures*. There can be nothing more decent than the amorous passion clothed in these imaginary dresses; but the system is more beautiful than true,—more fitted to be sung than carried into practice; it can, also, cause a sweet allusion to two simple lovers, delighting them with the amiable visions of innocent pleasures, but finishes by deluding them, and obliging them, as it were, almost by violence to obey the imperious command of nature. We are not without examples of fallacious systems and theological subtilties, which, amidst the obscurity of ideas with which they abound, have inspired the two sexes with a kind of spiritual pleasure, and have terminated in the same manner†. From the very verses of Petrarch this deception flows more than once, which afterwards, without any veil whatever, he discovers in his colloquies with Saint Augustin. But whether he

* *Gentil mia donna, io veggio
 Nel mover de' vostr' occhi un dolce lume
 Che mi mostra la via, che al ciel conduce.—Part 1. canz. 19.
 Rimira il ciel, che ti si volge intorno
 Immortate ed adorno;
 Che deve del mal suo quaggiù sì lieta
 Vostra vaghezza acqueta
 Un muover d' occhio, un ragionar, un canto,
 Quanto fia quel piacer, se questo è tanto?*

† Many examples might be quoted, which we leave out for decency. We will only note that, in the celebrated dispute of Quietism, excited in France between Bossuet and Fenelon, which attracted so many partisans on both sides: it was the famous Quietist Madame de Guion, who had made some impression on Fenelon, and having brought over so many persons of the court to her opinion, had seduced the pious and austere Duke of Chevreuse. He confessed one day to Boussuet, that when he was near that woman (who was very beautiful) he felt himself suffocated by the internal motions of grace, and made bold to ask the Bishop of Meaux if he did not feel the same.—*D' Alemb. Elog. de l' Acad. Franc. t. 2. Notes sur l'Eloge de Bossuet.*

considers Laura with the metaphysical ideas of Plato, or with those that are more common, the images are, for the most part, just and striking, the expressions tender and soft. His three songs, called the Sisters, upon the eyes of Laura, are perhaps a little pasted (to use the expression) with platonic metaphysics, and he teaches us more sensibly when, abandoning the stars, she falls upon the ground; but where can the Italian lyre boast of a gem to be compared with that* in which, leaving Platonism aside, he describes the fountain in which Laura bathed herself, and imagines that all objects clothe themselves with joy at the sight of her, and produces such tender and delicate ideas, expressed in a style at once the most harmonious and elegant? The sonetto has been brought to perfection by him; few even tolerable were read before him†. The heroic songs make us constantly lament the more, that he has not chosen our language for his poem of Africa; they are full of great ideas expressed with magnificence of sublime style, which is never ostentatious. From a poet like Petrarch, nurtured with the Roman classics, and abounding in the grand ideas which do honour to the heroes of Latium, who rendered so venerable

Le antiche mura che ancor teme ed ama;
E trema il mondo, quando si rimembra
Del tempo andato, e indietro si rivolge‡.

What was not to be expected? The subject must elevate the mind, and warm the fancy, as happens in those

* Clear, fresh, and sweet waters, &c. p. 1. canz. 14. This was placed in elegant Latin verses by Mercantonio Flaminio.

O fons melioli sacer, &c.

† If what is mentioned in the first volume of the collection of Agostino Gobbi, upon the salutation of his woman, belongs to Dante, to whom it is attributed, it is the only one that can vie with any sonetto of Petrarch in tenderness; it begins

Tanto gentile e tanto onesta appare. &c.

‡ *Par. prima, canz. 6.*

songs; and really what a difference is there between these and other weak and forced productions, together with the crowd of inferior and obscure amorous sonettos? Many of the latter are not only mediocre, but even below mediocrity, interwoven with ideas, too common, and sometimes too far-fetched. The melody of his Cittern is tender and sweet,—but the tone is rarely varied, and the chords are not very numerous. We can make no comparison between the poetical productions of Dante and those of Petrarch, since they differ too much. It would be as great an act of indiscretion to compare the puerile Canzoniere of Dante with the mature one of Petrarch, as it would be to put a boy to trial of strength with an adult; nevertheless, we have seen the latter frequently not disdain to imitate the former. We may rather compare the poetical talent which each possessed. In this comparison, probably, it will not be denied, that Dante was not superior to Petrarch in grandeur of imagination, in the strength of his thoughts and expressions; but he yields to Petrarch in the refined softness of the poetical colouring, and in the harmonic sweetness of the verse. Petrarch will, therefore, delight the greater of readers, as happens in painting, where ten are captivated with the beauty of the colouring for one who prefers greatness of composition and design. Thus the softness of the words, the harmony of the verse that flatters the ear, attract the greater part, who yield more to their senses than to the mind. In Dante we meet with more variety, more novelty and grandeur of thoughts, but these are frequently choaked in a certain stiffness and obscurity of expression; and the reader, often annoyed at following a rough path, in order to arrive at pieces of delicious ground, abandons the road from fatigue*. This incon-

* What power the sweetness of Verse possesses we learn from vulgar persons, who learn by heart and sing the Octavos of Tasso

sweetness is met with less frequently in the songs and triumphs of Petrarch, since we are flattered at least by the sweetness of the style ; but it must be confessed that, in the latter, sweetness sometimes makes amends for the ideas, whilst, in the former, the ideas are often too crowded, and, as it were, come in rude contact with each other. Corresponding expressions appear to be wanting. Both these great men are fathers of the Italian poetry. It was necessary that one should succeed the other, in order that grace, tenderness, and harmony, should follow grandeur and strength.

Men like to compare the ancients with moderns : the comparisons, however, are always imperfect ; all languages possess their appropriate merits, as well as writers, who differ as much as physiognomies. Herein the rich variety of nature displays itself.

The Romans could boast of no poet equal in fancy to Dante. The Greeks possessed one in Homer ; but who could point out a poet that has united tenderness of affection, sweetness of style, with fervour of imagination and an elegant decency, equal to Petrarch ? We meet with some similarity of tender sentiments in Tibullus ; but, if we are not blinded by prejudice, we soon perceive how greatly Petrarch surpasses him. This enchanting sweetness and endearing tenderness, both of thought and style, is even greater in the second part, where he mourns the death of his mistress. After twenty-one years of fervent love, and when, to use his own words,

Giunto era il tempo dove amor si scontra con castitate.

in the destructive pestilence of 1348, the beautiful Laura

without understanding them, since they so far disfigure the verses, that no sense can be any longer found in them. Nevertheless, their ears are flattered by that harmony without sense.

died on the same day, 6th of April, and in the same hour in which, twenty-one years before, she had so deeply smitten the susceptible heart of Petrarch*. The tender verses of the second part, and particularly the sonettos, bear testimony of this sensibility of his heart,—of the perseverance of his passion, and that

Piaga per allentar d' arco non sana.

He began to perceive himself that he was indebted for the celebrity of his name, to the amorous rhymes more than to all his other works, the continually increasing fame of which ever saluted his ears; and he repented of not having given more attention to them†.

The lively fancy and the classical learning of Dante and Petrarch had brought the poetical Italian language to perfection. Prose was not so much cultivated; but even this was indebted for its more solid establishment to Florentine writers. With them historical prose began. Putting out of the question certain rude chronicles, and among the rest those of Pisa and other cities‡, the most ancient Italian historian, properly so called, is Ricordano, or Ricordaccio Malaspina§. The epochs of his life are not well established; and, if we are to follow the common opinion, we must fix it to have been very long. He

* Consult the document placed in front of the Virgil of the Ambrosiana by this poet, which begins,

Laura propriis virtutibus illustris, et meis longum celebrata carminibus, &c.—Hist. Typogr. Mediol, and elsewhere.

† S' io avessi pensato, che si care

Fosser le voci de' sospir mie' in rima,

Fatte l' avrei dal sospirar mio prima

In numero più spesse, in stil più rare.—*Per. 2. son. 25.*

‡ Mur. Rer. Ital. script.

§ Manni, on the Method of studying the Florentine History, says that he has found in a manuscript that his true name is Riccardaccio, corrupted here into Ricordano.

wrote the ancient history involved in a thousand puerile fables, and that of his own time, honestly down to the year 1281. But we know not where to fix with precision the authentic beginning of the latter, which however, on account of his supposed long life, should be established at least forty or fifty years anterior to his death. Although it is rude in style, it surpasses in elegance every thing of the historical that has been written in the same age in Italy*. It was continued after the year 1281 by Giacchetto, or Giacotto, his nephew, five years more.

The little Chronicle of Neri Strinati Alfieri scarcely deserves to be mentioned. The author wrote it in Padua, where, when driven from his country, he repaired.

The style of Dino Compagni evinces some little progress to have been made in the language in the few years that elapsed from one to the other historian. We find in it less rudeness, and a certain simplicity which gives credit to what he was a spectator of. He is accused of being of the Ghibelline party; and it was, in reality, a difficult thing to remain impartial, in the midst of the furious persecutions which the two sects carried on. The declamations, however, which he makes at the beginning of some of his books, and in the body of the history, more in the style of a missionary than an historian, are directed against the general perversity of the citizens; and as to the rest, we have not been placed in a situation to judge of it.

* Tiraboschi contends the antecedeny of time with Malaspina, and gives it to Spinello, yielding, however, the greater elegance of style to the former, and who lived in the same age; but maintains that the Histories of Spinello were published first. It is very difficult to fix with any precision what may be called publication before the invention of printing.

John Villani, however, imparted greater elegance to the historical style. It is true that, even down to his own times, he has copied, and almost verbally, the *Chronicles of Malaspina*. We often meet with precision, clearness, and sometimes a golden simplicity in the style of John; nor is he deficient in strength. The chronicle is not without the rudeness of the times; it breathes, however, an ingenuousness on every side. The author appears not to be devoted to any faction; and his work forms one of the most respectable pieces of history during almost the half of the fourteenth century*. These chronicles enjoyed the singular honour of being abridged in rhyme by Antonio Pucci, which reminds us of the comical trait of Moliere, who imagines that a learned man occupied himself with turning into epigrams the *Decades of Livy*. This manuscript work lies dormant in the libraries, and will slumber there until it is consumed either by time or worms†. Villani began his work after having visited Rome in the year 1300, at the institution of the jubilee ordained by Boniface VIII. He himself confesses that the sight of the magnificent remains of Rome, the monuments of her greatness and the testimonials of the illustrious exploits, which are immortalized in the writings of Sallust, Livy, Valerius, &c., first awakened in him the idea of celebrating his own country in the same manner‡. He was a mer-

* It is said by all, that these chronicles remained hidden for almost two ages. They were first stamped in Venice in 1537. Macchiavello, however, quotes Villani once in the beginning of his history; it is true that he only quotes him once, and in the detail of the important facts, shews that he has not consulted him; the other writers, anterior to Macchiavello, make no mention of him.

† Series of portraits, &c. Elogium of John Villani.

‡ A great modern writer, the learned Gibbon, first embraced the

chant, enjoyed the first honours of the city,—and, when he was one of the officers of the Mint, ordered a book to be compiled, wherein all the ancient Florentine coins down to his time were to be registered, with the names and the signs of the Florentine officers. This is a precious code, which still exists in parchment, and for which we are indebted to the election to the office of an historical officer*. He travelled through various parts of Europe, according to the custom of the Florentine merchants; became involved in the failure of the house of commerce, Bardi, by which he encountered many difficulties, and even imprisonment. A celebrated Italian letterato, Muratori, thinks the style of Dino Compagni preferable to that of John Villani. It is true that many of the words and phrases of Villani are grown obsolete and out of fashion earlier than those of Compagni; but Villani is much superior to him in order, and particularly in the clearness with which the events are recounted, when he treats of the most important; he is a cool historian, whilst the other, by growing warm, often puts on the tone of a preacher, and detains his reader with trifling occurrences. Villani having fallen a victim to the fatal pestilence of 1348, his brother Matthew, and Philip, his nephew and son of Matthew, by whom the chronicle is continued, run the same race with minor celebrity, but were not behind him in diligence. Philip has also written the lives of the famous Florentines; and the modesty with which he speaks of his father and uncle does him the greatest honour; although the preju-

idea of writing his celebrated History upon the Fall and Ruin of the Roman Empire among the ruins of the Coliseum.

* Manni, Method of studying the Florentine History.—Orsini, History of the Coins of the Florentine Republic.

dices of the times, which obliged the elegant writers to write in Latin, prevented him from being sufficiently prized*.

Various other Tuscan chronologers lived in these times, such as Velluti, Buoninsegni, Capponi; but, as they were vulgar and plebeian, they have not imparted with their imagination one single breath of animation to their writings.

Among the fathers of fine saying (*bel dire*) who lived in this time, we meet with a group of illustrious Tuscan theologers of the Dominican order, from whose works, even at this day, the students of the language imbibe the purest draughts of learning, such as Bartholomew of S. Concordio, the Beato Giordano, Domenico Cavalca, and Jacob Passavanti. Bartholomew of S. Concordio, a town not far from Pisa, was one of the most learned men of his time in theology and other learning; but his translation of Sallust, and of the Book of Documents of the Ancients, are those which form the greatest ornament to our language. He died in the year 1347, at the age of eighty-five years.

Beato Giordano, of Rivolto, a castle in the Pisan territory, was a famous preacher, who made use of his native tongue with the greatest propriety, instead of the barbarous method then in use of preaching in Latin, and was, therefore, earnestly followed wherever his voice was to be heard. His style of sermons is considered classic.

Domenico Cavalca, born in Pisa, or in Vicopisano, of the same order, clothed the gospel truths with an elegance of style, and which are clearly expounded in the *Specchio di Croce*, in the *Pungilingua*, and in various

* Series of Portraits. Eulogium of John Villani. Conte Mazzuchelli has translated in part, and enriched this work with notes.

other works, a series of which may be seen in the writer of his eulogy*.

To these three illustrious Dominicans, must be added, Friar Jacopo Passavanti, who was born in Florence, at the end of the thirteenth century, put on the habit in Santa Maria Novella, was a lecturer upon theology and philosophy in various cities; a celebrated preacher, and director of the building the church of Santa Maria Novella. But sermons, theology, and philosophy, all have disappeared, and his glass (*specchio*) of true penitence alone remains as an ornament of the language, written first in Latin, and afterwards translated by himself into the vulgar tongue. The works of these theologists enjoy the double advantage of teaching at once Christian morality, and elegance of style. The religious truths are clothed in simple and elegant garments, which although they are without ornament, please the more probably because they are adapted to the subject. The elegant purity of style, in which the precepts of the gospel are taught, sweetly penetrates the heart with a soft unction, and we appear to hear the first fathers of the church speaking. These religious persons lived in the happy period, in which the language spoken in Tuscany, was altogether pure and elegant, since thereon was founded the first basis, upon which the great edifice is supported, whence the learned tribe, *che il più bel fior ne colse*, directed its diligent researches particularly to this age. We must, however, weigh every thing with a scrupulous balance. The language of this age is pure and simple; but its purity and simplicity resemble that of an innocent child, which has not yet well formed its character; poor in spirit and ideas, and which is not

* See Memorials of Illustrious Pisans.

capable of affording delight by its conversation: all it contains is good, but this all is little. In order that the language may arrive at perfection, it becomes necessary that it should acquire the means of administering to the orator and poet the colours, whereby he may draw a lively picture of his ideas. Those colours for poetry were created by Dante and Petrarch, whilst prose was still without them. Of those two great Florentines, who were most fitted for the undertaking, Dante has written only a languid and far-fetched prose: and Petrarch has preferred the Latin tongue.

The father, therefore, of the Italian *bel dire* is John Boccaccio. His family, which originally came from Certaldo, established themselves in Florence from motives, probably, of commerce, and gave that city the honour of counting John amongst her citizens. Whether he was born, however, of a legitimate matrimony, or was a child of an amour; whether his father, who resided for purposes of commerce in Paris, fell in love with a French girl, and this son was the fruit of it; whether he was born in Florence, or whether a subsequent matrimony made him legitimate or not; are questions not easy to be decided, and contribute very little to the merit and the works of John, which at present chiefly interest us*. Intended by his father first for commerce, and afterwards for the study of law, his natural inclination seduced him to pleasing literature, and when a merchant in Naples, visiting the sepulchre of the Songster of Æneas, he felt a spark of

* He was nine years younger than Petrarch, according to the testimony of the latter, (Senil. lib. 8. ep. 1.), and was born, therefore in 1313. For the points in question, Fil. Vill. de Fam. Flor. Domenico Aret. Manni, Ist. del Dec., &c., may be consulted by those who are partial to these trifling circumstances.

that sacred fire kindled in his bosom; and after various obstacles, the muses and belles lettres became his principal object. His masters in belles lettres are not well known, and on the other hand it is unnecessary to seek them for a man who, except in the Greek language, was a master of himself. The friendship of Petrarch, which he enjoyed during his whole life, encouraged him still more to fine studies. It is no part of our duty to run through all the epochs of his life: it is certain that he enjoyed the highest honours in his native country, and was employed in various respectable embassies, and in one particularly to the court of Avignon*. The historians who have written of this man, describe him as very susceptible of the amorous passion, and his works confirm it, all which breathe love. Fame reports him to have been the fortunate lover of a woman of high distinction in Naples, the natural daughter of King Robert, called Maria, and whom he calls, Fiammetta; and although doubts have arisen upon it, there is reason to believe that this assertion is not without some foundation†. His merit as an Italian poet is not very considerable. He is the founder of the fine style of the Italian prose, which received from his pen a colouring until then unknown. Amongst all his works the

* Mehus, Vita Amb. Cam.

† Tiraboschi, examining the various works of Filocolo, of the Fiesolan *Ninfale* of Fiammetta, finds contradictions. Those works are written after the style of a romance; hence all the circumstances must not be weighed with the scale of a goldsmith, but rather with the steelyard of a miller. And if the price of the work was upon it, it would not be difficult to shew the great probability of the fact from a concurrence of circumstances often repeated in his writings, and from the concordant opinion of his historians. But in what relates to this woman we must consider them as always tinged with a romantic style.

Decameron is that which has acquired a lasting and very extensive celebrity. To this we are indebted for all the labours, that so many commentators have spent upon it. Not only has it been attempted and probably in vain, to determine what were the villas, in which the elegant tale-telling society, (and of whom the latter was composed) assembled * ; but, Manni, a diligent Florentine historian, searching with extraordinary patience, through old archives and books little known, thinks himself enabled to assert, that the tales of the Decameron are almost all real histories, which happened at that time † ; and has given us the true names which the

* See Bandini Fiesolan Letters. One has thought the Villa of Trivisi, another, Poggio Gherardo, &c., but the indications of Boccaccio are too general, and may be suited to too many situations.

† The Florentines, anxious for a book that so much interests their language, such as the Decameron, have not omitted the most scrupulous researches, in order to bring to light all the circumstances, and particularly the villas where the fair company assembled ; but it appears to be demonstrated, that it was all an invention and an opportunity taken from the circumstances to recount tales. In order to untie the knot immediately with the strongest argument, we will observe that Boccaccio was not at that time in Florence, as he himself confesses, when not recounting novels, but where he speaks as historian, in the comment to the poem of Dante, at Chapter VI., or in the commentary upon the sixth canto of Hell, "Se io ho il vero inteso perciocchè in quei tempi io non c'era, io odo che in questa città avvenne a molti nell' anno pestifero 1348, che essendo soprapresi gli uomini dalla pestilenza, &c." And if in any other part, as in the description of the plague, he appears to have been there, we must confess that he speaks as a novelist : whence both the villa of Schifanoia and Poggio Gherardo, and the valley of women, and all that is particularly told in the Fiesolan letters, is probably a dream. And, in fact, the second villa particularly, is too magnificent to belong to merchants who loved (as it has been said by some) to have their coffers full of florins in gold, but did not at all like to spend them in pompous luxury ; the villas therefore, are imaginary, like

prudent Boccaccio thought proper to conceal. This celebrity induced many men to make versions of it, and the refined Petrarch honoured one of them with a Latin translation, and addressed it to his friend the author. His modesty made him select that of Walter and Griselda as an example of conjugal obedience. The tragic tale of Tancredi, Prince of Salerno, has been often brought upon the stage, and translated by many: two Aretines have employed themselves upon it; Leonardo Bruni translated it into elegant Latin prose; the celebrated lawyer, Francis Accotti, put into Italian *terzine* the latter part, that is, when the heart of the lover is presented to Gismonda; Philip Beroaldo has written it in Latin elegiac verse; and a few others have translated it into Latin prose; to say nothing of the many other translations which have been made of the whole *Decameron*, in German, Spanish, and French, and the elegant imitations of the great fabulist La Fontaine. The style at once dignified and brilliant, with which the description of the fatal pestilence is adorned, and with which the book begins, was adapted to surprise his age, which knew of nothing which approached it: in the novels the style is judiciously varied, and is either elevated or debased according as the subject demands it: it speaks a more exalted tone in the day on which the sad Philostratus proposed the tragic theme, than in that of the playful Dioneus. The book is worked with great genius, and the adventures therein recounted, are so varied, as to afford no ordinary pleasure. We are

the deer and the young goats in the garden. Perhaps some one might say that Boccaccio, even far off, knew the history, and wrote it; some document would be necessary of that time, and then in any manner would it not be a better plan to ascribe it to the fancy of the author, and yield all to it?

delighted, too, in that book, with a certain picture of the customs and manner of living of our ancestors, the simplicity of which, even in vices, makes a piquant contrast with the refinement of our own. Comparing the novels of Boccaccio with the moral tales of Marmontel, we have at once a picture of the customs of ancient Florence, and of modern Paris. What Dante and Petrarch had done in poetry, Boccaccio did in prose; from the various languages he was acquainted with, and particularly from the Latin, he derived new words and phrases, together with new colours to enrich it. It cannot be denied there are not some defects in the style; sometimes it is prolix and verbose; a defect easily to be forgiven in a subject which demands not a particular precision and brevity: the other defect is the far-fetched manner, which presents itself to us in a style, at times excessively figured; detaining himself too long upon a metaphor, and converting it often into tedious allegory; in the entanglement of the periods, and their excessive length. The disposition of the words follows not the order which our language requires. This we have noted elsewhere*. He has endeavoured to impart to the Italian language, the hyperbole and the transpositions of the Latin, which it does not admit of. Few examples are found, too, of a robust and vibrate style: it is true that, like all the other prose of Boccaccio, it was little susceptible of it, but when the author possesses it, he makes himself felt by degrees in the softest subjects as a hero appears when disguised. The defects of great men and the founders of style unfortunately continue to be perpetuated; and in all ages, and even in our own, the

* See Essay the First.

ignorant imitators of Boccaccio, instead of copying his beautiful and natural phrases, imitate his entanglements, his length of periods, and antiquated words; and consider themselves pure and golden writers. Another objection of greater weight arises against this book; it is accused, with much reason, of containing a school of obscenity, fitted only to deprave the morals. He himself appears to acknowledge it as a book calculated to seduce incautious youth, entitling it boldly with the name of him who seduced the two unfortunate brothers-in-law sung by Dante *. From the facetious defence he undertakes to make of himself in that same book, he appears, even in his own times, to have been condemned for this defect. That playful defence is made at the beginning of the fourth Giornata, and contains very spirited traits, adapted to gain the heart of the fair sex. To those who accused him of betraying in that book a too fond attachment to women, he replies, by adducing the reciprocal inclination of one sex towards the other, which nature has planted in the human heart; and, in order to prove it, he recounts one of his most graceful tales, that of Friar Philip, whose son, brought up remote from the city and the sight of women, the first time he sees them was struck with their appearance, and asks his father what kind of animals they are: the latter answers him, "They are wild geese:" whereupon, with the greatest simplicity and earnestness, he begs his father to purchase him one, and that he will amuse himself with making her peck. In the latter years of his life, he bitterly repented of his libertine manner of writing; and reading the pathetic letters in which he

* *Galeotto fa il libro, e chi lo scrisse.*—Dan. Inf. Boccaccio entitles his Decameron for the same motive, Prince Galeotto, although this impudent intitulation belongs to him.

prays with all fervour that the refined world may abstain from reading them, we appear to hear his shade imploring mercy from historians, for the literary frailty of his youth; and therefore we must pardon him, in gratitude for the many charms with which he has enriched our language*. We lament only, that a book, containing so much elegance and amusement, cannot be granted to young people. In order to clothe with decency, and place a book so respectable, before the eyes of modest persons, various corrections were printed, in which, among others, Cav. Lionardo Salviati has distinguished himself: but it cannot be denied that, in these corrections, the work loses a great part of its grace, and it would be the same as to pretend to take away from a young woman her charms and flattering arts, and constrain her to the matronal decency: she would no longer please in what is called *beau monde*. Upon these corrections Grazzini, or Lasca, spent his comic salt in graceful and piquant octavos; and Traiano Boccalini, in his political *Pietra del Paragone*, gives an

* Among other documents of the repentance of Boccaccio, (see his *Life*, by Philip Villani), we have one of the most luminous in the letter found by the Abbate Cioccheri, Librarian of the University of Sienna, and transmitted to Tiraboschi of which the latter has printed a fragment, tom. 5. p. 2. lib. 3. This same repentance imbittered the last days of his celebrated imitator la Fontaine. His jests against Clausticals, his tales of their weakness have made him unjustly pass for irreligious. He has found a brave defender in Cardinal Bellarmino (Manni, *Ist. del Decam. Prefaz*); the religious belief of Boccaccio is inferred, too, from the terror which the prophecy of approaching death spread over him, made to him in the name of the blessed Peter Petroni, a Carthusian, from his companion Padre Ciani. Boccaccio, highly struck at this annunciation, wrote to his friend Petrarch, who, in a very feeling manner, poured into his mind the balsam of consolation. He survived the prophecy thirteen or fourteen years.—Manni, *Storia del Decam.* p. 1. c. 27.

account of Boccaccio having been assassinated by the Cav. Lionardo Salviati for twenty-five dollars, which the printers, Giunti, paid him, and that the poor man was so lacerated and ill-used by the many wounds he received that he was no longer to be recognised.

The Decameron is the capital work of Boccaccio; and the many editions of it which, even in our days, are ever multiplying after four centuries and a half, are at once the most certain proof of the pleasure with which it is read, and of the immortality of the work itself. His other Italian works, although all bearing the stamp of love, and in the same style, are not read with the same pleasure. The *Fiammetta*, the *Filocolo*, the *Ameto*, the *Labyrinth of Love*, &c., are poetical romances, since for the most part, the descriptions and the phrase itself are poetic; the poetic metre alone being wanting. In the same kind, we read the writings of the Greek and Latin romancers; and the *Ass of Gold*, of Apuleius, in degenerate Latin, has a tint wholly poetical. In these we discover that nature had given to Boccaccio many of the qualities that form a great poet, but this capricious mother, who forms so many moulds without finishing them, denied him one quality, viz., an harmonious ear; hence arises the difficulty in the mechanical texture of the verses, and the harshness and want of harmony in those which he has written. To him we are indebted for the invention of the octave rhyme, which has elevated itself to a noble sublimity, since it has constituted the metre of epic poetry*. What will appear more singular is, that poetical images are found perhaps more in his prose than in his verse, particularly in *Fiammetta*;

* Crescimbeni has some doubt of it.

which proves, that the labour of making verses, chilled his fancy in the latter, which when it became solved from every tie, breathed the more freely*.

The applause with which the Decameron was received, gave rise afterwards to many imitators, who were unequal to the original. Francis Sacchetti, a Florentine, is an author of this description, and cotemporary with Boccaccio. He wrote three hundred tales, forty-two of which are lost. Their great merit consists in the natural manner in which they are narrated. The style is sometimes low; and although spirited traits are not wanting, many are very common, and which deserved not the honour of being written. He was also an esteemed poet in his time.

Another writer of Florentine novels is a person of whom we know little more than the name of Ser Giovanni, and that which he has been pleased to give himself in the proëmal sonnet, in which he speaks, both earnestly and in joke, with great humility of himself; of his book called "*Peccerone*;" of the cause of this name; and of the time in which it was written. From the sonnet we may infer, that the novels were composed or related by a society of private friends, and that Ser

* The poetical works of Boccaccio are numerous. The principal is the poem *La Tescide* in octave rhyme, in twelve books: the *Filostrato*, the *Fiesolan Nimfal*, and the amorous vision in five triumphs. He is even less a poet in the Latin verses. His long eclogues are very inferior to those of Petrarch. Boccaccio was aware of his poetical mediocrity, if it is true, that when he had read the poems of Petrarch, he wished to burn his own.—*Pet. Sen. lib. 5. ep. 3.* But he did not burn them, because self-love softens always the condemnation, which the first coup d'œil of reason may have given. The other Latin works of Boccaccio are various. The most important is, *De Genealogia Deorum*.

Giovanni was the publisher of them. The following is the Sonetto:

Mille trecento con settant' otto anni
 Veri correvan, quando incominciato
 Fu questo libro, scritto ed ordinato
 Come vedete per me Ser Giovanni.
 E in battezzarlo ebbi non pochi affanni,
 Perchè un mio car signor l' ha intitolato,
 Ed è per nome Pecoron chiamato,
 Perchè ci ha dentro nuovi barbagianni.
 Ed io son capo di cotal brigata,
 Che vo' belando, come pecorone,
 Facendo libri, e non ne so boccata.
 Poniam che il facci a tempo e per cagione
 Che la mia fama ne fosse onorata,
 Come sarà da zotiche persone;
 Non ti maravigliar di ciò, lettore,
 Che il libro è fatto, come è l' autore.

“ One thousand three hundred and seventy-eight years were truly past when this book was began, written, and put in order, as you see it, by me, Master John. And in baptizing it, I suffered not a few vexations, because a gentleman dear to me has entitled it, and is called by name, Duncce, (Pecorone), having within it new follies.— And I am the head of a brigade of simpletons, prating like a duncce, making books of which I know not one word. Let us suppose that I did it at a time, and upon the occasion of my reputation being honoured by simple persons; be not surprised, therefore, reader, that the book is made like the author.”

It would be injustice to consider Petrarch and Boccaccio, the one as a mere poet, and the other as a writer of novels. They are both the restorers of letters. The first rays of their revival began to shine forth amidst the barbarisms and obscurities, in which the degenerate Latin was written. A crowd of plebeian writers, both in verse

and prose, had dishonoured letters in the lower ages, and the barbarous Latin verses, unworthy of being read as appertaining to the muses, deserve to emerge from oblivion, only on account of some knowledge of history or learning, which antiquarians at times select from this dung. Whoever will have the patience not to read throughout, (which is impossible), but only to scrape a little of the dirt from this vulgar herd of poets and prose writers of the middle age, will see that the epithet we make use of is no insult to them; and if any very rare exception is to be found, if any elegant trait is met with, it may be considered as a fine flower, growing in the winter of Siberia*. Scarcely ought we to mention the poem of Peter Vernense as a step towards the improvement of the Latin language, in which he has celebrated the conquest of the Balearic islands, made by the Pisans; nevertheless, when compared with the poetical filth of those times, some small degree of refinement may be discovered in it.

Arrigo, of Settimello, a borough close to Prato, and distant seven miles from Florence, was the man who, in Tuscany, and in fact in all Italy, began to remove the ruder scales, with which Latin poetry was covered. His

* May we be permitted to quote, as an example, perhaps the only one of an elegance truly extraordinary for those barbarous times, a few verses upon the illustrious remains of the city of Rome of Herbert Bishop of Tours, who died in the year 1139.

Nec tamen annorum series, nec flamma, nec ensis
Ad plenum potuit tale abolere decus,
Hic superum formæ superi mirantur et ipsæ.
Et cupiunt fictis vultibus esse paræ.
Nec potuit natura Deos hoc ore creare
Quo miranda Deum signa creavit homo:
Cultus adeat his numinibus, potiusque colatur.
Artificis studio, quum deitate sua.

Fabric. Biblioth. Mediæ et Inf. ævi in voce:—HIDELBERTUS.

parents were country people, and he raised himself above his situation by the cultivation of letters, repairing for that purpose to Bologna. Literature, however, procured him no great fortune; and, if the lamentations he makes in his poem are not the effusions of an exaggerated poetical fancy, he appears to have led a life of poverty, of misery, and persecution. It was written in elegiac verse at the end of the twelfth century: the title is *De Diversitate Fortunæ et Philosophiæ Consolatione*: and he attempted to imitate Boethius. Although his verses, in the present refinement of taste, shed no great lustre upon his name, they are still superior to all that was written at that time*.

The poem de Sancta Jerusalem of Nicolas Michel Bonaguti, a Florentine, still a manuscript in the Laurentian library, might also be mentioned†. Among the literati of this age, Del Bene, a professor of grammar in Bologna, who merited the eulogiums of Pier delle Vigne‡, would deserve a place together with others, whom it is better to let peaceably repose in the dust. The true restorers are Petrarch and Boccaccio. The Latin and Greek languages owe much to them. We have seen that Petrarch wrote his poem in Latin, and although it is far removed from the elegance of Virgil, nevertheless it is elevated, not only above all preceding, but even over cotemporary, writers. His eclogues, other poems, and writings in prose, prove the same. Boccaccio also has written Latin poetry, but it is inferior in elegance and facility to that of Petrarch, perhaps as much as his Italian poems.

The study of the learned and foreign languages had

* Filipp. Vill. Degli Illus. Fior. Mehus Amb. Cam.

† Catal. Cod. Lat. Bibl. Laur. vol. 2.

‡ Mehus Ambr. Camald.

been cultivated in Italy for some time. The Arabs had united to the glory of arms, that of letters and sciences; hence their language, together with the power and influence of their nation, had extended itself also into the christian provinces. Many works were translated from that language. The sovereigns of Sicily, Frederic and Manefroi, were the generous promoters of this as well as of all other studies, and various works were translated under their auspices. In Pisa, where a rich commerce was carried on with the coast of Africa, the Arabian language was currently understood*.

Nor was the Hebrew unknown in Italy, and among the rest may be quoted John of Capua, a converted Jew, who made a version from the Hebrew into the Latin, of a work, held in high esteem among the Indians, Culila and Dimma, interspersed with tales and fables, for the information particularly of courtiers†.

The Greek language, even in the most unhappy period of letters, was never lost in Italy. The influence of the Greek empire over her, the continual commerce which was carried on, the theological disputes between the two churches of the east and the west, had always kept the study of that language alive in Italy‡. Papias flourished as far back as the eleventh century, but we are not acquainted with his native place. His elementary or Latin vocabulary, clearly discovers the learning he possessed in the Greek idiom. In the following century

* A treaty between the Pisan republic and the King of Tunis, made in 1265, was turned into Arabic, of which Buonagiunta of Cascina was interpreter.—Flam. del Borgo, Rac. di Documen. Pis.

† It was dedicated to Cardinal Matteo Rossi, made Cardinal by Urban IV., an. 1262. Fab. Biblioth. Græc. vol. 6. p. 460. Bibl. Lat. Mediæ et Infimæ Latinit. vol. 1. p. 332.

‡ Monsig. Gradenigo, &c.

too, Burgundio, a Pisan lawyer, was a celebrated translator from the Greek into Latin of some homilies of St. Chrysostom, and other Greek manuscripts, and was the ambassador of the Pisans to Constantinople*, where he distinguished himself as a learned man, and for his skill in theological controversies†. Uguccione the Pisan, is another Grecian, who was cotemporary with him and his fellow-citizen, who has been already mentioned in his place as a canon and Bishop of Ferrara‡. From his Lexicon, as well as from that of Papia, it appears we may derive the comprehension of the Greek language. We have mentioned these as Tuscans. Many others may be quoted in Italy, who were versed in the Greek language§, but it was taught in no university; and although some works of Aristotle and of the fathers of the Greek church were known, Italy hardly knew the name of the great Greek classics.

In an angle which had once been peopled by Greek colonists, and had been honoured with the name of Magna Grecia, and afterwards of Calabria, a popular Greek dialect remained, and was revived by the monks of St. Basilio, who kept seven convents alone, at Rossano||. From these solitary cells issued Barlaam, the same man, who first made the Italians acquainted with Homer, the father of Greek classics. He was a native of Seminara. His studies in the Greek language, his travels and permanent abode at Constantinople, made

* Flam. dal Borgo. Origin. dell' Universo. Pis. Mem. degli illus. Pis.

† He died in 1194.

‡ Looking at his eulogy in the illustrious Pisans, we perceive how much the two languages of the learned owe to this man.

§ Tirab. Ist. della Lett. Ital. tom. 4.

|| Giann. Ist. di Nap. tom. 1. pag. 520.

him deeply learned in Greek letters. The esteem in which even his enemies held him, proves the truth of his merit, and the persecution that he suffered from the fanatic Greek monks upon the light of Tabor, shews his good sense: but we will not excavate this dispute, as it were, from the oblivion to which it has been consigned, that we may do further dishonour to human reason. Barlaam, being in Avignon, and sent there by the Greek Emperor Andronicus, to treat with that court upon religious and political affairs, got acquainted with Petrarch; and as they were the most learned men of their age, they easily connected themselves in ties of friendship. The avidity of Petrarch to get acquainted with the Greek classics, made him apply with ardour to the lessons of the monk: but when the fruitless embassy was finished, Barlaam was obliged to return to Constantinople, abandoning his scholar in the first passages of the Greek tongue; and thus the immature studies of Petrarch were lost. The monk, obliged to return to Italy, by the furious persecution of the monks of Mount Athos, whose visionary light of Tabor he had recently ridiculed, found Petrarch at Naples; and the latter would have been enabled to re-commence his studies, had not the establishment of his friend pleased him better than his own literary progress: he, therefore, procured him the small bishoprick of Locri or Gerace*. This bishop died in a

* The ancient Locri, in the middle age was called St. Ciriaca, and by corruption, Jerace or Gerace (Chorog. It. Med. Ævi. Rer. It. Scri. tom. 10.) Tiraboschi is wrong in making two places of Locri and Gerace, and says in order to accommodate the geography, that the bishoprick was transferred from one to the other, quoting L' Ughelli, It. Sac. v. 10. in Ep. Locr. The same writer believes that these two men met once and not twice, and that it happened the second time the monk returned to Italy, before being made bishop: these minute cir-

short time, learned not only in Grecian belles lettres, but he had kept on the right side of the question in many of the dark monastical disputes, and was not ignorant of geometrical and arithmetical knowledge*.

Petrarch, therefore, was obliged to content himself with the desire, without the means, of learning that learned language, and in a poetical and fanciful letter written to a person who made him a present of a Greek copy of Homer, he confesses with sorrow, that the golden volume lies dumb by the side of him, and that his eyes are blind to the specious images contained in the Iliad and the Odyssey†. The glory of reviving in Europe the Greek classical literature, belongs to John Boccaccio, and to Florence that of having established a chair for the Greek language, where Homer began to acquire considerable esteem. Boccaccio made acquaintance with another Calabrese or Thassalian‡, Leo or Leonzio Pilato, a scholar of Barlaam, and invited him to Florence in the year 1360. He came, and at the instance of Boccaccio a stipend was assigned him by the republic, to teach Greek literature. He was very learned in every kind of Greek erudition. But his figure and deportment were singular. He affected rather the cynic negligence of person than the Platonic cleanliness. A deformed and rude exterior, with black stiff hair, erect and partly falling about his face, a black rough beard, a dirty man-

cumstances are of little importance to the interest of matters. That Petrarch endeavoured to get him promoted to the bishoprick, he himself attests.—Var. Ep. 21.

* Dom. Aret. apud. Mehus, Vita Ambr. Tirab. Ist. della. Lett. It. tom. 4. lib. 3.

† Famil. 9. 2.

‡ Boccaccio, upon his assertion, calls him Tessalonicense; but Petrarch says: "Leo noster vere calaber, sed ut ipse vult Thessalus, quasi nobilior sit Græcum esse quam Italum." Sen. l. 3. ep. 6.

tle, completed the picture of his appearance: clownish manners corresponded with his cynic dress, and a humour at once bilious and inconstant, made him little susceptible of the pleasures of stable social connexions*. Such was the first master of the Greek tongue in Italy. Boccaccio lodged him in his house, and for the space of three years studied incessantly that language with three fellow pupils; under him he learnt to read and understand Homer, and was able to make sufficient progress, and transcribe a literal prosaic translation of the Iliad and the Odyssey†; but the eccentric Leo, who had been brought to Venice by Boccaccio, unstable in his disposition, began to sigh for Constantinople. The most polite remonstrances that Petrarch made with him in Padua, were not sufficient to retain him; he departed, execrating Italy, and the Latins; but hardly was he arrived at Constantinople, when he repented and sighed again for Italy, and on the return, the vessel being overtaken in the Adriatic by a tempest, the unfortunate philosopher, who had imprudently tied himself‡ to the

* Jannot, Maretti Vita Petrar.

† Boca. Gen. Deor. lib. 15. cap. 7. Some other rude translation of Homer probably existed before, as the Abbate Mehus proves; and, perhaps, too of Pindar. The passages of Homer, quoted by the most ancient authors who were ignorant of the Greek, lead to the supposition of the existence of a translation. Among these too may be mentioned Dante, who in the *Vita Nuova*, speaking of Beatrice, adds, “di Lei certo si poteva dire quella parola del poeta Omero: ella non pareva figliuola d’uomo mortale, ma di Dio.” Of her certainly the sentence of the poet Homer might be said: she appeared not a daughter of a mortal man, but of God.—Homer speaks of Helen.

‡ It was not, rigorously speaking, imprudence, in a man ignorant of the effects of electricity and lightning, but it would be so in our times. Ulysses was more fortunate who, on a similar occasion, also tied himself to the mast.

mast of the ship, was struck and killed by the lightning, which the conductor to which he had bound himself, directed towards his body.

Boccaccio persevered in the study of Greek letters even without a master; and his work upon the genealogy of the gods, admirable for the time in which it was written, abounding in Greek quotations, must have procured him the greatest repute. But the seeds of that literature which had been sown in the Florentine soil, were about to perish with the death of Boccaccio, when the ardour for that study was revived in Florence in a more stable, and never again interrupted, course, by the arrival of the Greek Emanuel Crisoloras*, who was invited to, and established in, Florence, by the interest it excited in the learned and unfortunate citizen, Palla Strozzi, of whom we shall have to speak in his proper place. Crisoloras, born of a respectable family which boasted of having emigrated from the Latin soil with Constantine, in the establishment of Constantinople, had been sent by the Greek emperor to the European court, in order to ask assistance against the Turks, who threatened the feeble remains of the Greek empire with a complete ruin. Having wandered long in vain, and obtained more promises than succour, and being merely invited by the Florentines, the man who actually was, and had been, ambassador of a miserable emperor, disdained not to accept from the rich Florentine republic, the appointment of Professor of the Greek Language†. He was equally learned with Leo in Greek letters, and more conversant in the Latin, which gave him a facility

* An. 1390.

† Tiraboschi maintains that Crisoloras came to Italy twice; first as ambassador of the emperor; the second time he was invited by the Florentines.—*Ist. della Letter. Ital.* tom. 6. p. 799.

in communicating his ideas; whilst his mild manners delighted, as much as the cynical ones of Leo disgusted, his scholars, who therefore flocked around him in great numbers. Among the latter, Leonard Bruni, the Areline, was one of the first and most distinguished, in whom, even from his boyish years, the fame of Petrarch had kindled a generous emulation, and the sight of whose portrait, even in the most miserable circumstances of his country and family, stimulated to the literary career*. Upon the arrival of Manuelle he was cultivating the law: delighted by researches into classical Greek knowledge, he wavered for a short time, doubtful what course to take; but he finally chose not to neglect so precious an opportunity, and his name is among the first restorers of Greek letters. Of him, however, we shall have to speak more at large in the succeeding epoch. From this moment the elegant Greek literature, brought to new life in Florence, continued to flourish, and the light which had been first kindled there, diffused itself over the rest of Europe.

Coluccio Salutati is a learned man, whom we must not pass over in silence after these three great men, although he is very much inferior to them. The friendship between him and Petrarch; the high celebrity that he enjoyed during his life, demand from the historian some account of him. Born in the year 1330, in Stignano, in the valley of the Elsa, (Val d' Elsa), an exile, together with his father, from Tuscany, on account of factions, taking shelter in Bologna with Taddeo Pepoli, he studied law there by order of his father: genius, however, led him to the belles lettres, to which he gave himself up entirely after his death. Coluccio

* See Comm. and the present history, lib. 3. cap. 13. not.

was a political literato, and after he had filled the office of Apostolic Secretary to Urban V., he was created Chancellor and Secretary of the Florentine Republic, which may be considered as a kind of minister of foreign affairs; a charge of the greatest importance at a time, in which the Florentine republic was of great weight in the balance of Europe. Faithful to his fellow-citizens, and highly honoured by them, eloquent in supporting, by his voice and pen, the interests of his country, he became formidable to her enemies *. Considering him at present on the side of letters, he was one of their greatest promoters, a diligent researcher of ancient codes, he possessed that prudent criticism, so fitted to distinguish the true from the apocryphal, to correct and purify them from interpolations. His epistles were very much esteemed: the vast extent of every kind of knowledge he possessed, made him as admired in society, as the sweetness of his manners, universally beloved: hence his fame was equal to that of Petrarch, as the many eulogies clearly demonstrate, which are found of him in the writings of those times. His works, however, both in verse and in prose, for the most part Latin, have not maintained that celebrity. It has rather continued to languish in proportion as posterity have left him; whilst that of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, established upon a more permanent basis, has become continually more luminous. At the time in which he lived, his verses were in such esteem, that his fellow-citizens demanded from the emperor the permission to crown him; as if a respectable republic had not the right to confer such a testimony of honour upon a fellow-citizen.

* Gio. Galeazzo Visconti used to say that he feared more a letter from Coluccio than a band of a thousand Florentine horse.

Having obtained the faculty, but the solemn act being deferred, the death of Coluccio taking place, the insensible body was publicly honoured by a barren laurel. Time, an infallible judge, has placed Coluccio in his true place; his literary merits, like the beautiful but frail colouring of a picture, have lost much of their lustre in coming to us.

The glory, therefore, of Tuscany and of Italy in this epoch, is derived from the three great legislators of the Italian tongue, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. Amongst the many writers cotemporary with them in every kind of science or letters, who have fallen into oblivion, their fame has continued increasing. All three, endowed with great imagination, and made, therefore, for fine literature, have laid the foundations of it in Italy. In this illustrious triumvirate, few will doubt that Boccaccio must not be placed in the last rank; the doubt upon the primacy will be upon the other two. We have already said enough in the proper place, in order to shew what kind of glory is due to both; and if we must agree that in greatness and strength of imagination Dante exceeded Petrarch, we must also confess that the latter added to the poetic style what the other, at least in part, was deficient in. Boccaccio has beaten a new career, and has been the father of Italian prose, as the former is of poetry. Born in more humble life, he was less subject to political tempests than the other two; he lived in an honourable poverty, loved by the fair sex, and honoured by his citizens. Petrarch was more fortunate than Dante, because he was independent and master of himself. The remains of the paternal inheritance, saved from the rapacity of the hostile party, and the ecclesi-

astical benefices, he enjoyed*, although they did not make him opulent, gave him the comforts of life, and the opportunity of living wherever he pleased, without the assistance of others, which, besides gaining a greater consideration from the public, removes infinite displeasures, to which the exquisite sensibility of the minds of poets exposes them, and which are avoided by changing country. We therefore find Petrarch rarely remaining long in one place; and when he did so, he lived in solitude, passing much of his time in the delightful retreat of Val Clusa; whilst the unhappy Dante, obliged to live at others' expense, was constrained to suffer in silence what his irritable spirit would not permit him. And here we must take into consideration the little indulgence that is generally given to such men.

We have noted that great imagination which is the mother of sublime poetry, cannot be separated from an extreme sensibility, and consequently from an irritable character. The indiscretion of mankind would lead them to desire the first without the second; and, instead of having compassion upon the weaknesses which are an effect of nature, as we would take compassion upon the physical sensibility of any person who falls into convulsion at the touch or healing of a wound, whilst another, made of a harder fibre, suffers the iron and the caustic to be applied almost with indifference, becomes still more malignant; and increases in extravagance. Whoever possesses the means of removing himself from the irritating cause in the moment of danger, let him avoid shewing the spectacle of the

* Among these, was that of the Priory of S. Niccolas of Migliarino in the diocese of Pisa, conferred upon him by Clement XI.

convulsions of his irritated spirit. Dante was not able always to do this; Petrarch, however, could; and therefore we see him sought for, by the first gentlemen and princes of Italy, who contended with each other for the honour of possessing him; but short was the sojourn the prudent and sensible poet made at their courts. The Florentine republic ashamed that a citizen so illustrious should be numbered among the exiles, having bought up at the public expense the estates of his father which had been already confiscated, restored them to the son, inviting him to come to his native country, by a solemn embassy taken to him by Boccaccio who was a professor in the university established there after the plague. He renounced this honour, loving his independence. But the most glorious event for him, and that most adapted to solace the heart, and elevate the spirit, was his solemn coronation in the Capitol. It is a singular occurrence that on the same day, that is, on the 23d August 1340, he received letters both from the chancellor of the university of Paris, Robert de' Bardi, and from the senate of Rome, in which the crown was offered to him in both these cities. He determined in favour of the Capitol. How grateful must it have been to a mind like his, full of remembrance of the ancient Roman heroes, which had with so much avidity, sought upon that classic territory for the ruinous remains of Roman grandeur; and which had admired them with so much enthusiasm, to ascend that same Capitoline hill, which the Roman heroes went up, in order to be crowned with the leaf of that

*Arbor vittoriosa e trionfale,
Onor d' Imperatori e di Poeti.*

The solemn honour of the poetic crown, so deservedly obtained by Petrarch, was conceded some time after, in

the year 1355, but, probably, not with so much justice, to the poet Zanobi of Strada, a town a few miles distant from Florence. The son of John Mazzuoli, a school-master, followed that calling after the death of his father. The protection which the great Acciajoli gave him, not only loaded him with honours by promoting him in Naples to the royal secretaryship, and afterwards made him apostolic secretary, but gained him the poetic crown from the Emperor Charles IV., whilst this sovereign was in Pisa, steps and seats being fixed upon the stairs to the dome, where an immense concourse assembled, the emperor made the solemn coronation of Zanobi. Although Zanobi enjoyed a considerable reputation in his time, many considered him not sufficiently worthy of the honour, which, as the friends of Petrarch said, made the waters of Parnassus foul; and Petrarch himself, although a friend of Zanobi, was not pleased with this coronation, although it was not that of the Capitol (*Campidoglio*); regretting that the Germans should venture to be judges of Italian genius. The honour, however, in which Zanobi was held by the Florentines, is inferred from the determination taken by the public, in 1396, to erect to him, as they had done to Dante, Petrarch, and Accursio, a mausoleum placing him fourth amidst so much sense (*fra cotanto senno*), an idea that was never carried into execution*. Of this man who was so celebrated in his time, there exist only five verses quoted by Mehus, the apostolic letters, and the elegant translation in prose of the morals of St. Gregory.

Returning to Petrarch; he was a lover of the tranquillity and independence of Italy; and with sorrow saw

* Mehus, Vita. Amb. Cam. Matteo. Vallani. Cronica. di Pisa. Ben. Ital. Scr. vol. 15.

her torn in pieces by her own and foreign arms. He always, therefore, both in verse and prose, animated the Italians to shake off the foreign yoke, and remember their ancient splendour. Full of these delightful visions, which were directed always to the public good, he united himself in close friendship with the celebrated tribune, and afterwards excited by every stimulus of glory the Emperor, Charles IV., to re-organize the states of Italy. As antiquarian studies formed a part of his extensive knowledge, he collected a series of ancient medals, of which he may be considered as the first collector. Having met with the most genteel reception from that Emperor, he wished to make him a present of his medals, amongst which there was one of Augustus, and he had the courage to tell him, "Behold the great men, whom you have succeeded, and whom you ought to imitate:" (*Ecco i grand' uomini, ai quali siete succeduto e che dovete imitare**) But the miserable Charles was far from possessing the extensive power and lofty views of the Roman Cæsars, and was obliged rather to ask alms from the Italian cities than to give them laws. Petrarch is accused of having been envious of the glory of Dante. The almost perpetual silence upon that great poet, who must also have merited the praises of a man like Petrarch, have made it suspected, and the letter addressed to Boccaccio, wherein he wishes to defend himself from that accusation†, is a new proof against him. We will not

* Ab. de Sade. t. 3. p. 381.

† The letter is addressed to Boccaccio: Dante is not mentioned, but is characterized in a manner not to be understood but for him. Tiraboschi, considering the expression of Petrarch to Boccaccio, who appears to excuse himself to him for his veneration of Dante, by asserting that he had been his master, thinks that they may belong to others than to Dante, who could not be master of Boccaccio: "Inseris hanc officii tui excusationem, quod ille tibi adolescentulo

undertake to examine this doubt scrupulously, nor to uncover a veil which can only present us with unpleasant objects, from which it is better to turn our eyes, and respect, with a kind of religious feeling, the irregularity of great talents, and the frailties of virtue. If these three are almost the only great men which the polished and unpolished world alike acknowledge: of their numerous works also, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the *Canzoniera* of Petrarch, the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio, have alone escaped oblivion; which advancing through ages, have always acquired a greater splendour, and with the same progression as the others have fallen into obscurity. Probably these are the only three productions of real merit which the epoch we have run through presents us with; an epoch more happy in the productions of imagination, than of reason, as the history of the fine arts demonstrates.

THE FINE ARTS.

All the arts, which are daughters of imagination, may be called sisters; consequently their rise, progress and decay, proceed almost with an equal pace. The same impulse which raises the fancy of poets to give animation to nature, at the same time guides the pencil and the chisel of great artists. It therefore becomes natural, after the golden age of Augustus, to see the decay of letters accompany that of the fine arts; the former probably had preceded the latter in rise, and, on that account too, preceded them also in their decline, as happens in human life; but, from political revolutions, that of the arts was

primus studiorum dux et prima fax fuerit," &c. It is not difficult to see that Dante was master of Boccaccio, as of Petrarch and of many other poets, and that he calls him such, as Dante has called his father Guido Guinicelli.—*Purg. cant. 26.*

accelerated more rapidly. In the times of Adrian, the latter were in their splendour, whilst the refined literature of the golden age of Augustus was constantly mixed with a very inferior alloy. The decline of the arts, however, took place with a movement so accelerated, as soon made them fall below literature, which is better supported, because it is cultivated by the solitary learned, in the retirement of the closet, even in the midst of tumults and revolutions, which on the other hand deprive the arts of that public support, of which they stand in need; hence, in a very short time, they fall into the greatest debasement. From the times of Constantine the Great, a lasting monument is handed down to us of the barbarism into which the arts had sunk, in the triumphal arch erected to that sovereign. In order to adorn it they made use of bas-reliefs, which decorated the arches of Trajan, and the age was so stupidly ignorant as not to perceive not only the inconsistency of affixing the trophies of Trajan to a monument raised to the glory of Constantine, but to the elegant works of the times of Trajan the rude and unpolished of their own, like incasing a flint stone from the Arno amongst diamonds*. The arts continued to be farther degraded in the following ages; and although we cannot say with mathematical precision that they were extinguished, the very weak ray that remained amidst so much obscurity was probably only fitted to lead astray. The barbarous works of the lower ages are equal to the total extinction of the art. Of what consequence is it to dispute, whether the revival of the arts

* See Winkelm. History of the Arts, who mentions, that upon re-establishing a temple, the columns were turned on the wrong side, by the same Constantine.

has taken place from a complete extinction, or from a condition perhaps even worse than extinction? A certain rude style of painting, of sculpture and architecture, has always existed even among savage nations; consequently it should have been far superior amongst the Italians, who had so many fine monuments of the arts before their eyes. It may therefore be asserted that the fine arts were never totally extinguished: the documents, however, which are quoted concerning them are not very glorious for Italy*. The statues of Theodoric and of other kings of the Goths, the ancient sculpture of Pavia in the church of San Michele, the paintings made by order of Teodolinda in the palace built by her in Monza, from which the Deacon Paul collected the fashion of the dresses of the Lombard warriors†; the rude Mosaic worked by the Greek and Italian artists in the long course of those ages, prove, certainly, that they both painted, carved, and built; just as the barbarous poetry of Donizzone and other poets of that age are a proof that verses were made: but if Italy had been without those painters and poets, her glory would not have suffered. Even in these artists, rude as they were, she did not abound, and Desiderio, Abbot of Monte Casino, in order to adorn the new church he built, was obliged to call Greek artists from Constantinople‡.

* Tirabos, tom. 3. lib. 2. 3., &c. Murat. Dissertar.

† Paul. Diac. lib. 4. c. 20.

‡ The passage of the chronicle of Leo Marsicano (lib. 3. c. 29.), which has been the reason of so much scandal from those who think it a great injury done to Italy to assert, that in a certain time the fine arts were extinguished, it is true, speaks of mosaics and in-layers of pavements; but if these two arts were the most common in Italy, since the most common paintings of those times are mosaics, and if the workmen were so little in esteem as to be sought for from afar, what must we say of the others?

In the midst of this universal barbarism, however, Florence erected her baptistery, probably from the remains of the ruined temple of Mars in the Lombard ages*, and under Charles le Magne, the church of St. Apostolo; edifices that are far removed from the ignorance of the age; the latter, indeed, is so free from Gothic rudeness, that it has merited the imitation of Brunellesco. After a long course of years, we find a taste for architecture maintained in Florence, since, in the year 1013, the church of San Miniato upon the Mountain was rebuilt upon a good model, and the artists imitated in the arches, cornices, and other ornaments, the good ancient specimens. At this same time Pisa signalized herself greatly. Her power and riches made her turn her thoughts to the erection of the most magnificent building of that age, her cathedral. The various kinds of art necessary to so great a work which was began and finished in the eleventh century, must, on account of the demand for them, have given activity to genius. The industrious artists, in raising the ponderous masses, the mosaics, and pieces of sculpture, with which it was adorned, are a sufficient testimony of the united endeavours of all the arts. It is true that the fine arts are seen in that building almost in their ancient rudeness, covered over in great part by gaudy ornaments and outward grandeur; it is true, that the greater part of the artists who were employed, were Greeks†; but the Tuscan genius, so curiously observing, diligently imitating, and wisely improving from things seen, and which had a share in the execution of a work so long continued, learnt and improved upon what it saw; and in the attrition, as it were of so many arts and of so much genius, sparks flashed forth fitted to kindle the sacred fire of taste.

* Lami, *Lez. d' Antichità*.

† Morrona, *Pisa illustrata, &c.*

This first motion was kept in activity by the edifices of St. John, of the Tower, and of the Campo Santo, which arose successively in the following age ; and about this time we meet with a Pisan raising himself above his cotemporaries, abandoning the ancient miserable manners, by which artists purely mechanical, and without genius, sculptured and painted, and beginning to infuse new life into the arts. We are better acquainted with the works than the circumstances attending the life of Nicolas Pisano ; he is one of those men whose genius stood in need only of being roused, he may be regarded as the first reviver of them ; and architecture and sculpture were alike awakened by him from their long slumber. His celebrity soon became so great, that in Italy, and particularly in Tuscany, works of his hand were constantly sought for. The sumptuous edifice of the Saint in Padua, is a proof how much Nicolas immediately raised himself above his cotemporaries ; the church of Santa Trinità in Florence was the admiration of the great Buonaroti, who was accustomed to call it his favourite lady ; whilst in Pisa, besides other works, we admire the capricious artifice of the steeple of S. Nicolas of the Agostinians, which is octagon without, rotund within, and enriched with other ingenious singularities. Knowing the instability of the soil of his country he brought the art into fashion of strengthening it by subterraneous palification. Sculpture still more than architecture, was indebted to him for the progress it made. Awakened by the fervour his country evinced for the fine arts, it is thought he formed his genius upon the bas-relief which covers the sepulchral urn of the Countess Beatrice* : it was probably a spark that first kindled

* It represents a hunt, and many suppose that Nicolas has studied from it. Vasari. Life of Nice. Ciampi, notizie inedite, &c., of the

his fancy ; but had it not been for the activity in which the arts were placed in his native country, the genius of Nicolas would never have displayed itself. To such a man the contemplation of the models of nature is still more valuable than a small fragment of the art. The celebrated urn, cut out by him in Bologna, in 1231 ; the two histories of the universal judgment in the dome of Orvieto, the pulpit in St. John of Pisa, alike proclaim him the restorer of sculpture and design. This sculptor, therefore formed a school, to which, much as might be wanting, in order to arrive at Michel Angiolo, he still had the glory of making the first and most difficult step, that is, of departing from that method, which, for so many ages, had limited the fine arts to a servile and mechanic imitation of barbarous models. In arts, as in sciences, men are frequently very near the right road, when it appears they cannot see it ; but scarcely has a man of genius made the first step towards it, when, as if awakened, they hasten to it in crowds. Various sculptors issued from his school. His son John degenerated not from the father : of his chisel, the tombs of Urban IV., of Benedict IX., and the great altar of San Donato, in Arezzo, were most admired. From these a school was propagated that did honour to Pisa, being continued in John Balducci, in Andrew, the Pisan, who sculptured the statues, with which he adorned St. John of Florence, and with the labour

Campo Santo of Pisa, &c. This famous Sarcophagus has been lately transported into the interior of the Campo Santo, where it is preserved, together with other respectable monuments of ancient sculpture, which have been collected there by the labour of Sig. Carlo Lasinio, conservator of the same, who, after having made the styles of the first Italian artists known by the paintings which adorn the walls of the Campo Santo, may be justly considered as the new founder of this gallery of ancient marbles.

of twenty-two years, completed one of the bronze gates of that church, a prelude to what was to follow of higher perfection from Orgagna, Ghiberti, and Donatello*.

Almost at the same time in which Nicolas displayed his talents throughout Italy, another great man flourished in Florence, Arnolfo di Lapo†. I do not think we have any proofs of his being the scholar of Nicolas, and if he was the son of that Jacob who raised the church of San Francis of Assisi, he inherited the genius from his father, and early imbibed his precepts‡. He surpassed Nicolas in architecture, and rivalled him at times in sculpture: the majestic church of Santa Maria del Fiore, in Florence, is a proof of our assertion, as is likewise the old palace, (Palazzo Vecchio), upon the top of which, with that boldness and intelligence, of which he was master, and profiting of the support of the ancient tower of Foraboschi, he planted that which we now so much admire. Besides many other works in sculpture, he executed the sepulchre of Boniface VIII., a work upon which he appears to have taken a great pleasure, as he cut out, in Rome, his name upon it§.

Thus we see the first dawn of the fine arts rising in Tuscany. It is necessary, however, to throw aside all spirit of party, and every mean controversy: some, in respect to the fine arts, maintain that every thing was derived from Florence, others from Pisa: but neither of the two assertions is rigorously speaking true. Besides many

* Vasar. Baldenucci. Lanzi Istor. Pittor.

† Others call him Arnolfo di Cambio. Baldinucci decenn. 2.

‡ There is a great obscurity in the epochs of the life of the first restorers of the arts, rendered still more uncertain from the wish of deriving all from Florence, as George Vasari has done.

§ Baldinucci Decenn. 1.

architects who have preceded Nicolas, we must not omit Marchionne the Aretine, who lived in the twelfth century: he worked much, both in Rome and in his native country, finished the church of Santa Maria della Pieve, in Arezzo, where, in midst of the whimsicalities with which he has covered it, he has not failed to discover traits of inventive genius. We are all Tuscans, and instead of carrying on a civil war, let us delight in the Tuscan glory.

The Mosaics, works for the most part of Grecian artists, were for a long time the principal ornaments of the churches; works, indeed, which if executed with exactness, would have been of great difficulty, but rude and vulgar as they were in those times, became still more easy than painting, since we more easily excuse their incorrectness of design; and as to the colours, art or nature rudely furnished them. At this same time the art was very much improved by Andrea Tafi Florentine, and by Friar Mino of Turrita, who left the Greek artists in Mosaic greatly behind him.

Painting too was about this time revived in Tuscany. Those rude seeds, which had been scattered in Pisa and elsewhere by the Greek artists at this time, in which the Tuscan genius, freed from feudal oppression, had opportunity to unfold itself, and to cultivate them, soon bore fruits. We meet, almost at the same time, both in Pisa, Sienna, Florence, and Arezzo, with painters, who begin to mark out new lines of the art. Giunta of Pisa, Guido of Sienna, Bonaventura Berlinghieri in Lucca, Margheritone in Arezzo, and afterwards Cimabue in Florence, worked almost at the same time; and although all these cities, animated with a noble emulation, may aspire to the glory of being the nest from which painting

rose to new life, still from that same dispute, in which we shall avoid interfering, greater glory results to Tuscany*.

Vasari has attributed the revival of painting to Cimabue. The assertion, if taken with mathematical exactness, is false; but Cimabue may be considered as the man, who, amongst all his cotemporaries, made the greatest advances in the art, and threw forth a light which eclipsed every other. Ciullo dal Cama, the two Guidi, Friar Guittone of Arezzo, preceded Dante, but the latter may be called the creator of Italian poetry†. The celebrity he acquired immediately over all others in Italy, the testimonials of his superiority which have been given him, not only by his fellow citizens, but by so many foreigners; the authority of Dante, who although he was a Florentine, has not only never flattered his fellow-citizens, but irritated as he was by exile and persecutions, frequently employed the scourge of satire against them, justify Vasari in great measure‡. Cimabue was born of a respectable family of Florence, and was both an

* The painters named appear to owe every thing to their genius. Giunta, perhaps, preceded every other in age; since he must have been born about the end of the twelfth century, if it be true that he studied in 1210, as Father Angeli attests in the history of the church of S. Francis D' Assisi, Guido of Sienna painted in 1221. That Cimabue was a scholar of Giunta Pisanq we have no authentic proofs nor do we wish to make use of far-fetched conjectures. Bartholomew in Florence, prior to Cimabue, and, perhaps, even his contemporary is the same, who has painted the celebrated Virgin, announced by the angel, in the church of the Servi. Vedi Lami, *Disser.*

† The comparison, however, is not exact. Dante profited of the poetical light of those writers. Of Cimabue it is not known that he studied upon the works of the painters mentioned; but Cimabue is far from having brought painting as forward as Dante did poetry.

‡ See the Apology of Balducci, decen. 2, Bottari, notes to the Life of Margheritone.

architect and a painter. Formed by nature, more for sublimity than grace, he has given to his figures a grandeur, an expression, and a strength which are admired even in our own times. The great improvement to which he carried the art was discovered in the magnificent picture of the Virgin surrounded by Angels in the chapel Rucellai, in Santa Maria Novella; the Florentines were greatly surprised, and had seen nothing like it; and not only King Charles of Angiers, the Conqueror of Naples, came to express his admiration of it, but the people in crowds and in procession resembling the triumph of the painter, accompanied him with the sound of drums from his habitation to Santa Maria Novella*.

Giotto was not only the pupil, but the creature, of Cimabue. He was a shepherd at Rondone, and whilst taking care of his flock, was observed by Cimabue painting a sheep upon a stone. This was a ray of that genius for the art he had received from nature, which, impatient of being controlled, shone forth transparent under such garments. Being brought to Florence by Cimabue, and instructed in the art, he soon equalled, and even surpassed his master. To the robustness and sublimity of Cimabue, Giotto added grace, a greater frankness in the design, a softer and better chosen colouring, movements more natural: all which favoured the advance of the art; and the histories of S. Francis, which he painted in Assisi, near those of Cimabue, prove how greatly the master had been left behind†. He was

* Vasari, Vita Cimabue.

† This became immediately the universal opinion. Dante, who only repeated it, thus expresses himself;

*Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo Campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido,
Sicchè la fama di colui oscura. Purg. c. 11.*

a sculptor too, and the connoisseurs of the art have computed the advantages which the two sister arts derive from each other, and how greatly they aggrandize the style of whoever possesses them both. Among the many works of this illustrious painter in Rome, Ravenna, in Florence, in Padua, and Pisa, the best judges fix their attention particularly upon those of the church of Assisi, from which we discover the great progress made in the art under Giotto*. The miniature painting received from him, as from Oderigi of Gubbio, new grace, and the vessel of St. Peter, in the Portico of the Vatican Basilica, although touched up and changed, is, at least, a monument of the knowledge of Giotto in the art of mosaic. As long as the majestic tower of Santa Reparata shall remain, it will be an eternal memorial of Giotto being a great architect †. From Cimabue and Giotto a school of painting was formed, to which none of the most illustrious authors, in those times, have denied the superiority. Neither Vasari nor Baldanucci have particularly attributed the principal share in the rise of painting to these two great men: it is the common sentiment of their cotemporaries and posterity; this public consent is a sentence beyond appeal, nor are the cavillous subtleties, which have been introduced, sufficient to annul it, just as it would be impossible to drive

* See the pictoric History of Italy by the learned Lanzi, tom 1. lib. 1., where speaking of the works of Giotto in the church of Assisi, he says, "among the best things of this work is the image of a thirsty man, to the expression of whom hardly Raphael's animating pencil could add any thing."

† Although the inscription placed under his marble medallion in Santa Reparata, expresses, with dignity, the merits of Giotto, it does not sufficient justice to Cimabuc, as he cannot be left out in the new birth of painting, nor can it be said,

Ille ego sum per quem pictura extincta revixit, &c.

Dante and Petrarch from the situations in which time, an infallible judge, has placed them*.

Pisa, in the mean time, whose power and riches gave her the means of prosecuting in her noble fabrics, the impulse already given to the fine arts, invited the best pencils of Italy to display their talents in her celebrated Campo Santo in a laudable emulation. Almost all the painters of celebrity, in those times, have exercised their pencil upon it; that vast edifice, therefore, presents one precious gallery, in which the character of the art of that age, and its progress, are, as it were, stamped, and the various styles of the painters are placed under the eye; it is only to be regretted that local circumstances render the injuries of time more rapid, and already have not a little altered, as they are continually destroying, so precious a monument. In this theatre, not only Giotto, but his pupils, and other renowned painters, highly distinguished themselves. Buffalmacco or Buonamico of Christofano, exercised his pencil upon it with great merit, together with Bruno†, painters of note, but they acquired a greater comical celebrity from the tales of Boccaccio, than from the art.

The Orgagna family is one of artists: but Andrea, who was adorned with the three arts, far excelled his brothers. Cotemporary with Giotto, he cannot be said to be of his school. Andrea in the chapel of Strozzi, at Santa Maria Novella, had, together with his brother,

* Baldinucci, in the imaginary tree of the birth and propagation of painting, has certainly not been very just, asserting that all was derived from Florence; whilst other writers alike unjust, against this city, have taken away from her what is deservedly due to her. One of the most impartial is the Abbé Lanzi, who, uniting erudition to taste, is therefore an excellent judge, and gives to all their due.

† Lanzi, *Istor. Pittor.* lib. 1.

drawn paradise : he painted death and the judgment in the Campo Santo of Pisa, and his brother Bernardo, hell. They delighted in painting living men naked, and two of the greatest men of that age, who were painted as large as life, may attract the curious eye, from being at once great warriors and rivals, viz. Castruccio, Lord of Lucca, and Uguccone della Faggiola*. The magnificent portico, which adorns the grand Ducal Square at Florence, the work of Andrea †, prove him to have been a reformer of architecture, having substituted a regular curvity for the acute order, with which Gothic barbarity formed the arches. The Orgagna created a school which has been acknowledged inferior to that of Giotto. It was very numerous, nor do our limits permit us to go through it minutely. As it happens with the followers of a great genius, his scholars became servile imitators, not daring to depart from the limits marked out by the master, and this numerous offspring resembles the cold imitators of Petrarch. Some deserve to be distinguished, and among the rest Taddeo Gaddi, who, by testimony of Vasari improved the colouring of Giotto, and his art was continued by Jacopo of the Casentino; from him to Spinello the Aretine, endowed with a very lively imagination, whereby his compositions derive a kind of originality in the invention, of which the histories of two holy martyrs in the Campo Santo of Pisa are a proof, which are so much extolled by Vasari, together with many other of his fanciful, or rather whimsical pictures in Florence, Pescia, and Arezzo‡.

* Vasari, Vita di Orgagna.

† Vasari says it was constructed by Arnolfo di Lapo; but as afterwards, in the Life of Orgagna, he attributes it to him, and says that before his time, it was uncovered, we must agree that Orgagna made the reformations which we, at present, see in it.

‡ Vaser Vita di Spin.

Amongst the Tuscans, at this time, the Siennese distinguished themselves in painting. Sienna, which always boasted of many citizens endowed with a lively and brilliant imagination, could not do less than produce painters. No city at that time, except Florence, reckons so many.

The glory of the Florentine school, which had arisen with Cimabue and Giotto, and had been supported by their followers, was, for a long time, stationary as well as that of the other sister arts. In order that they advance, it becomes necessary that great men rise, who should be placed in circumstances sufficiently happy to develop their talents. Nature is not at all fruitful: and many for want of education, remain in oblivion, like brilliant gems buried in the bosom of cold rocks. It may, therefore, be asserted, that the three arts, after this splendid birth, made no further progress until Brunellesco, Donatello, and Masaccio conducted them from the age of infancy to that of youth, which occurred in the following epoch, in which it will be necessary to speak of them.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC AFTER THE EXPULSION OF THE DUKE OF ATHENS.—NEW DIVISION OF THE CITY INTO QUARTERS.—DISTURBANCES.—DIVISION OF THE PEOPLE INTO CLASSES.—WAR CARRIED ON BY THE PISANS AGAINST THE VISCONTI.—GREAT EVENTS IN NAPLES AND ROME.—QUEEN JANE.—COLAS OF RIENSO.—THE REVOLUTION HE AFFECTED IN ROME, AND HIS UNHAPPY END.—VICISSITUDES OF NICHOLAS ACCIAJOLI; AND HIS INFLUENCE OVER THE AFFAIRS OF NAPLES.

EVENTS, like the expulsion of the Duke of Athens, might have taught the Florentines to what direful
1343. consequences the rage of party leads: but experience, however painful, has never made nations wiser, which rarely deliberate, when the passions are appeased, or with cool and tranquil reason. The public good is lost sight of in the tumult of factions and of personal hatred; and the Florentines, therefore, unimproved from their misfortunes, soon fell into them anew.

Florence regained her liberty, and at the same time lost her states. All the cities and castles of the Florentine dominion, hearing of the expulsion of the duke, to whom they had surrendered, thought they had acquired the right of declaring themselves free; and, driving out the governors, either by force or money, Florence remained at once without a ruler and without states: but her dominion and her true power consisted in commerce, which continued to prosper in spite of her many losses. And how would she have been able to bear these losses had this source of her riches failed her? It was not

long since the commercial firms of Bardi and Peruzzi, by the failure of the King of England, had stopped their payments for more than a million of florins in gold. The twenty citizens elected for the purchase of Lucca had left the community in debt to the amount of 400,000 more, besides the sum owing to Mastino. The duke himself had carried away 400,000, half of which he had transported into foreign countries; and various other considerable expenses had been incurred. All these evils, however, would have been trivial had concord prevailed.

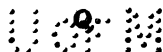
In the expansion of a joyful heart for the liberty they had recovered, the most important change made in the government was to admit the great, who had co-operated with great activity with the people in expelling the duke. This, however, was not effected without opposition. The people consented that they should be admitted to all the employments, except that of the priorship (*priorato*); but the eloquence of Bishop Acciajoli, who was at the head of fourteen reformers, prevailed so greatly, that they were admitted also into that department of the magistracy. The power of the fourteen reformers, through the changes that must have taken place, was evinced in a new division of the city; that is, instead of sixths, into the quarters of Santo Spirito, S. Croce, S. Piero Scheraggio, and Santa Maria Novella. In order to make the other reforms, eight of the great were associated with the fourteen, and seventeen of the people were chosen from every quarter, who, together with the bishop, formed the number of one hundred and fifteen persons. It was determined that there should be twelve priors, three for a quarta, one of the great and two of the people without a gonfaloniere, and that the great should participate in one half of all the offices. The counsellors of the priors were eight in

number; but the great, who were accustomed to look upon the people with contempt, and particularly the common people, even in the time of their humiliation, and when they were without authority, having now regained it, became so intolerable by their overbearing conduct, that the people, enraged, would not permit the priors to terminate the period of two months; but hastening to the palace, and threatening to burn it, obliged them to resign, the eight priors of the people remaining, one of whom was created gonfaloniere, and twelve counsellors re-elected; and seventy-five for each quarter being chosen for the representation of the people composed the council of three hundred. The nobility in rage yielded indeed to force, but appeared to yield in order only to take time to concert new means of revenge*; and openly arming themselves, the people did the same.

The generosity or ostentation displayed by Andrew Strozzi contributed no little to encourage the great. At the time of a scarcity of provisions, which took place in this year, whilst the granaries of the rich were shut up, he opened his own, and sold grain at a very low price. For this action the common people attached themselves greatly to him; and wherever he passed he was applauded, and followed by the multitude with shouts of "Long may he live." Either from the beginning he entertained ambitious designs, or that moved at first by pure generosity, and inebriated afterwards by the universal favour he enjoyed, he aspired to loftier views†. He entertained the idea of making himself master of

* Gio. Vill. lib. 12. c. 18.

† Istor. Pistol.—Messer Andrew Strozzi, who was very rich, not very wise, and a little touched in the head. Villani, too, calls him a madman, and a silly knight of the people.



Florence, and considered the present time most opportune, from the distractions into which the city was thrown. Having concerted the enterprise with many of the common people, which was highly disapproved by his relations and companions, he got on horseback, when four thousand of the people collected around him, proclaiming him aloud Lord of Florence, conducted him to the palace, intimating to the magistrate to give them place; but being repulsed from thence, as well as
 1343. from the palace of the mayor, and hearing that the city was taking to arms, they abandoned him; and Andrew concealing himself in his houses, this ephemeral movement finished in his flight, and subsequent banishment*. The event, however, gave still greater courage to the great, because it proved that the people were not well united with the populace,—and, bending from their loftiness, they used every means to gain them over to them. The two parties made their dispositions for open attack, the gentlemen giving arms to their peasantry, and sending for aid from their friends; whilst at the same time numerous succours arrived to the people from the Siennese and Perugians.

The commoners, or people, no longer able to suffer more, moved to the assault: the nobles had fortified themselves in three places on the right side of the Arno; at San Giovanni, in the houses of Caviciulli; at San Pier Maggiore, in those of the Donati; at Mercato Nuovo, in those of the Cavalcanti. These three posts were soon taken; and the great met with good fortune in being spared by the people, whose pardon they were obliged to implore. The contest was great on the other side of the Arno, where the Bardi, Nerli, Mannelli, and

* Vill. lib. 12. cap. 17, 18, 19.—Ister. Pistol.

Frescobaldi, had occupied the bridges; but being attacked, not only by the conquerors on the side of the north, but by the people and the populace on the same side, they were obliged to abandon the field. All the others yielded except the Bardi, who continued defending the old bridge with the greatest obstinacy, as well as the bridge of Rubaconte, and the street called Bardi. Nor would the populace so easily have overpowered them, if they had not taken a new street above Santa Felicita by the river-side, where, coming down upon them in the rear, they attacked the Bardi, who, being discouraged by this fresh assault, retired to the suburb of Saint Nicholas, where other citizens rescued them. The houses, however, of the Bardi were burnt and sacked to the number of twenty-two; and their loss was valued at 66,000 florins in gold. The bitter laws against the great, which had been already abolished under the Duke of Athens, were renewed; viz., that, upon their offending the people, one companion was to be held responsible for another as far as the third generation, and a fine of three thousand lire was to be imposed upon him.

Thus the power of the Florentine nobility was completely broken; and no other resource remained for them to participate in the government but to get themselves admitted into the rank of commoners, into which five hundred of them were received by favour, but were not rendered capable of holding the greater employments; and the punishment reserved for them, in case they should offend any of the people, was to be sent back into the rank of the great. So greatly was the nobility degraded, that it became a punishment to be considered one of them. The people, therefore, being composed of individuals, among whom so great a difference in riches and education prevailed, they were divided into first class (*popolo*

grosso), middle (*mezzano*), and small artisans (*artefici minuti*). Eight priors were drawn, two from the first rank, three from the second, and three from the third*. It is true this division had the air of nobility, citizens, and common people; but as there were no rules, which definitely marked the limits of these ranks, every one entered them naturally, as increased riches introduced him into them; and, although there was a considerable difference between the first and the last class, still, as they all were employed in commerce, which connected them together by the mutual assistance which frequently the same manufacture derived from the hands of all, they were drawn nearer to each other, and the miserable bore the sight of the exorbitant riches of the first rank with greater patience than that of the proud and insolent poverty of the great. Many of the latter retired to the country; but the hatred of the people followed them every where.

The last war between the Pisans and Florentines had left bitter feelings in the minds of the former and Luchino Visconti, who made pretensions to money from the Pisans, on account of the considerable succours he had afforded them. The sons of Castruccio and John Visconti, a Pisan, with others, had endeavoured to make themselves masters of Pisa and Lucca by putting to death or expelling the governors; but, upon being discovered, avoided punishment by flight, and taking refuge in the house of Lucchino, increased only the bad disposition of the latter. To this were added the instigations of
 1344. his wife Isabella Fieschi, whose brother, the Bishop of Luni, pretended to a right over many places, which the Pisans still retained. They had received

* Vill. lib. 12. cap. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.—Ist. Pistor.

Pietra Santa from the Florentines ; a selfish gift, which they saw would be fatal to the Pisans. These causes excited a war between them. The bishop put himself at the head of a body of troops, and began to molest the Pisans, who, sending a superior force against him, was obliged to have recourse to Lucchino, who, with the sons of Castruccio, sent proper troops to confront the Pisans. Various small affairs took place, in which each party was alternately the conquered and the conquerors. The Visconti, however, advanced and laid waste the Pisan territory; when the war extending upon the hills and near the sea-shore, both the small armies were attacked in the summer by an epidemy, which destroyed a great number of men; and in the following year peace was made, through the mediation of Philip Gonzaga, the Pisans binding themselves to pay Lucchino 80,000 florins in gold, and
 1345. the latter to restore the places he had taken*.

The Duke of Athens, who had been ignominiously expelled, had repaired to France, and instigated the king of that country to send him back Lord of Florence, and held a secret correspondence in the city for that purpose. The Florentines, therefore, promised a premium of 10,000 florins to any person who would put him to death. In the following year ambassadors of the King of Florence arrived, bringing complaints, in the name of the king, of the treatment shewn to the duke, and demanding that ambassadors should be sent to that monarch, invested with the power of settling differences. They sent them out of respect; but they only complained of the duke, and exposed his conduct.

An event which occurred in these times shews what

* Stor. Pistol. Gio. Vill. lib. 12. cap. 25. 28. 37. Martini.
 Cron. di Pis. Amm. Stor. Fior. lib. 10.

abuse the ecclesiastical inquisitors made of their power. The firm of Acciajoli had failed. Silvestro Baroncelli, partner in that firm, under the faith of the magistracy of the priors, was leaving the palace, where he had been to arrange their affairs. Scarcely was he gone, accompanied by the ministers of the magistracy, when he was arrested by the family of the mayor, at the instance of Friar Peter of the Eagle, (Piero dell' Aquila), inquisitor, and agent of the Cardinal Sabinese, a Spaniard, creditor of that firm to the amount of 12,000 florins in gold. The irritated priors caused Baroncelli to be liberated, and by an act of unjust cruelty ordered the hands of the executors to be cut off. The mayor asked pardon, and obtained it; but the inquisitor excommunicated the magistrate, placed the city under interdict, and departed for Sienna. The Florentines annulled the excommunication by a public act of the notary, and sent ambassadors to the pope in Avignon, in order to complain of the inquisitor, bringing in the mean time five thousand florins to Cardinal Sabinese, and making the community bail for the rest. It was afterwards made a law, that the inquisitor could interfere only in affairs of religion, that heretics were to have corporal and not pecuniary punishments, and that no executor should receive orders but from the secular magistrates*.

Two occurrences of the greatest importance took place at this time, adapted to throw Italy into the greatest ferment. The wise King Robert, who was without male descendants, had thought of securing the tranquillity

* It was also ordained, that neither inquisitors nor bishops should have the right of granting patents to carry arms. The bishops alone of Florence and Fiesole could grant them to twelve persons; the inquisitor to six, who was accustomed to make an abuse of the grant to many in order to draw therefrom about a thousand dollars a year.—Vill. lib. 12. cap. 57.

of Italy, and the kingdom of Naples, by giving his elder niece in marriage to Andrew the younger brother of the King of Hungary, his nearest relation, who had rights even superior to her own over the former kingdom*. This royal virgin was beautiful, of elegant manners, and versed in literature, a taste for which her grandfather was celebrated, and one of the greatest admirers of Petrarch: but she was capricious, inconstant, and impetuous in the soft passion which so frequently transports the fair sex beyond due bounds. Her rank and power, the artful flattery of the courtiers, who surrounded her, removed even the restraint proper to be laid upon her, both from her high consideration and female decorum†.

* Charles Martel, elder brother of King Robert, was dead, and his son Charles Umbert, King Charles still living, had been elected King of Hungary; wherefore when King Charles died, as Charles Umbert was far off, and Robert was desired by the Neapolitans, he became firmly established, and took permanent possession of the kingdom. His son had only two females, Jane and Maria: the King of Hungary, nephew of Robert, had a son, from whom Lewis and Andrew were born. As the family of Hungary had such reasonable pretensions to the throne of Naples, and these were increased by the want of males, in order to avoid all dispute, Robert had called Andrew to the kingdom, making him espouse Jane.

† There are few events upon which historians differ so much as upon the government of Naples, after the death of King Robert, upon the authority of Andrew, upon the customs of the Queen Jane: although almost all are agreed in her being an accomplice in the death of her husband. It appears that a Franciscan friar, Robert, Master of Andrew, governed the kingdom, and that the Queen Jane had no power. This is founded upon the respectable assertion of Petrarch, who being sent there by the pope to cause some prisoners' relations to be liberated, who were friends of the Cardinal Colonna, writes to the latter the most severe letter against the insolence of the friar. This document has been copied by many Neapolitan historians, who endeavour from documents, as Petrarch does, to excuse the Queen, but the cotemporary chronicles of Naples, and of other countries,

Being married to that young man, not finding him as amiable as she expected, and transported by passion for Lewis of Taranta, she deliberated upon the means of getting rid of her husband, and found immediately not a few persons even among the royal family of Naples, and the courtiers of her husband, who, without any difficulty, lent themselves to the execution of so barbarous an act. During night-time, whilst the unfortunate Andrew was in bed with his wife, in the garden of the friars of Murrone, in Aversa, he was hastily called up on account of despatches of importance, which were said to have arrived from Naples. Upon leaving the room, the door was shut behind him, and a cord being thrown round his neck by assassins appointed for the purpose, he was strangled and thrown into the garden*, in the nineteenth

speaking differently. That of Gravina, (*Rerum Ital. Script.* tom. 21.) after having described the youthful extravagancies of one, adds that Andrew had not the smallest authority: *Ut vix posset sine licentia Regine unam facere sibi Robam*. It may be that the writer was a partisan of Andrew, but he suffered persecutions for his death. The other chronicles of the age speak almost after the same tenor. Might it not be said that Petrarch, who was irritable in character, sharpened his satire rather too much upon that occasion. Tristano Carracciolo (*Rer. Ital. Script.* tom. 22) panegyrist of Jane, touches very lightly upon this testimony of Petrarch. He says much of the care taken by the grandfather, to have his grand-daughter holily and chastely educated: he relates that she was always surrounded by pious and venerable matrons, and that he had obtained a license from the pontiff to let the most virtuous nuns out of the convents, to keep company with the grand-daughter. All was vain, so true is the sentence of Horace;

Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurrit,

or as it has been translated,

Evano alla natura il contrastare;
Che se le chiudi l'uscio, la vedrai
Per le finestre a tuo dispetto entrare.

* John Villani tells this tragic event with great exactness. Nicholas

year of his age. The little care she took to discover and punish the delinquents, her hasty matrimony with her lover, made it believed, and not without foundation, that Jane was, at best, an accomplice in this atrocious crime. This barbarous action greatly enraged the whole of Italy. The pope, who was considered as supreme Lord of the kingdom of Naples, sent the Count Andrew, in his name, to demand justice, who finding every favour from the people, ordered some of the secondary perpetrators of the murder to be tormented and put to death. The queen occupied the castle with the treasure of the grandfather, and her lover, Louis of Taranto, took people into pay without Naples to enter it by force. The royal family, even those who had lent assistance to the queen, were divided amongst themselves from thirst of reigning: but the King of Hungary, the brother of the deceased, was grieved at it more than all. He came into Italy with a powerful army, and various changes took place by this arrival throughout Italy.

^{1346.} The other extraordinary event occurred in Rome, in which city a ray of the ancient republican spirit shone forth with a transient light. Prior to

Unghero, president of King Andrew, flying from Naples, passed through Florence, and related it to the brother of the historian. We must, however, entertain doubts of the great dissoluteness, which he relates, of the said queen, which were recounted to him in grief and anger by the enraged Unghero; such not being probable if she was in love with Louis of Taranto, whom she married shortly after. Among many others, three similar events may be noted in times not far remote from them. The wife of Edward, King of England, the Queen Jane of Naples, and the celebrated Mary Stuart resemble each other greatly in their passions, in crime, and in the punishment they suffered. Innumerable other cotemporary writers bear a uniform testimony, and recount the same; they may be consulted in Muratori *Rer. Ital. Script.*

this time some attempt had been made by a few extraordinary men to re-establish the liberty, or, at least, the regular government of Rome. We will hardly mention Arnald of Brescia, a scholar in metaphysics and theology of the unfortunate Abelard, and condemned as an heretic. He had ventured to assert, in the year 1140, upon the authority of the gospel, that the kingdom of ecclesiastics is not of this world, and that consequently the government of Rome belonged neither to the pope nor his ministers. He spared not even the imperial authority*, and for nearly twenty years made two pontiffs tremble. The agreement of Adrian IV with Frederic Barbarossa ruined Arnald, who was arrested, burnt, and his ashes thrown into the Tiber. About a century afterwards, another attempt was made to restore order and regular government to Rome by the Bolognese Brancalone. The Italian cities, incapable of governing themselves, had recourse to the choice of a foreign mayor. The Romans, with the same views, elected a senator, and Brancalone's fame for probity and justice must have been very great, as they called him from Bologna. The prudent Bolognese, for a long time, refused the dangerous office, and accepted it finally upon the condition that thirty of the principal Romans should come to Bologna as hostages for his safety. He then undertook the reform of Rome, and by the vigour of his government, equally repressed the insolence of the great, and the insubordination of the people. Rome

* The political doctrine that he went every where, and boldly too, preaching to the people, is expressed in the poem of Guntero :

*Consiliis armisque suis moderamina summa
Arbitrio tractare suo, vel juris in hac re
Pontifici summo paulum condere regi
Suadebat populo ; sic læsa stultus utraque
Majestate rerum geminæ se fecerat aulæ.*

1346. drew a short breath from the dangers of anarchy : scaffolds were prepared alike for the unbridled populace, as the overbearing great. Nearly one hundred and forty towers, which, in Rome, and throughout the country, were the asylum of the Plebeians and banished nobles, were thrown down, and the pope himself obliged with his faction to yield to the laws, and return to Rome under the orders of the senate and the people. An impartial reformer is always exposed to great enmities. The people easily forget benefits they have received, but enemies not easily their injuries. The senator was arrested by the united factions, and the convenient hostages, which had been very strictly kept in Bologna, saved him his life. He was soon liberated by the people who acknowledged their error, called to remembrance the justice of his government, and placed him again at the head of it. On account of the pain of death, which he had deservedly inflicted upon two of the principal signiors Annibaldi, he was excommunicated with his favourers by the pope, but the latter thought the Roman people, and their senator, could not be struck by these thunderbolts. Although some writers consider him as Ghibelline, enemy of the pope, because he was the friend of Frederic, of Manfredi, of Eggelino, posterity acknowledge his equity. After his death, when envy is disarmed of her malignant shafts, his virtues were highly extolled; his head, placed in a precious vase upon a column, was regarded as a venerable relict of justice, and his uncle, in spite of the pope, succeeded him in the office*.

But the greatest and most brilliant attempt, according

* See for these facts Mattei Parisien. hist. Major., and the anonymous writer of the Life of Innocent IV. Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 3. p. 1.

to Petrarch, was made at this time by a man of the lowest extraction, by one Nicholas of Lorenzo Gabrini, vulgarly called Colas of Rienza; who was the author of this singular revolution. Rome was always exposed to the greatest anarchy: her spiritual and temporal sovereign, who, as vicegerent of the Saviour, ought to have inspired reverence and respect, and reinforced the temporal power with his aid, stood aloof. Some of the most powerful families of Italy, as the Colonnas, the Orsini, the Savelli, the Frangipani were the real governors of this unhappy city, who ruled not with the concordant spirit of
 1347. aristocracy, but fought and expelled each other by turns, by the force of arms. The Roman people were divided, and followed the various parties of their respective masters, who were alternately the conquerors and the conquered, the oppressors and the oppressed. The laws were silent in favour of whatever party predominated; the revenues of the state were plundered; the domestic peace was disturbed; the property, the persons, the honour of families were at the discretion of the conqueror. Nicholas was gifted with extraordinary eloquence; not that eloquence which wastes its words before the wind, and loses time in adjusting their disposition, but that eloquence which is capable of transfusing, with force and rapidity, the real sentiments of the mind even into the vulgar. Had he been born in better times, he might have rivalled Cicero upon the rostrum, and Cæsar in the field; he spoke, fought, and wrote with equal force. Although he was the son of an innkeeper, and a washer-woman*, his education was superior to his birth, and he

* The original history of Nicholas is written in the ancient dialect of Rome and Naples, and it is very singular that the name of the author should be Thomas Fiortifiocca, who in the same history is mentioned as punished by the tribune for falsification, and if the name

had nurtured his mind with the glowing sentiments of Tully, Livy, Seneca,, and of Valerius Maximus. The comparison of the ancient grandeur of Rome with her miserable condition in his own times ; of the ancient and virtuous heroes with the overbearing assassins, who domineered over Rome and her neighbourhood ; the sight of the magnificent remains of ancient Roman grandeur, inspired Nicholas with sentiments not adapted to his times, and he conceived the singular and gigantic project of extirpating tyrants, and reviving the ancient liberty. He went preaching republican sentiments, through the city, and repeating passages from ancient writers. The people collected around him in the streets and squares, listening to him with a pleasure, like an illustrious family, fallen into poverty attends to the tale of the splendid opulence and brilliant achievements of its ancestors. The ignorant nobility, who foresaw not to what extent this political missionary might go, laughed at him as a fool ; a name often given, at the beginning, to extraordinary men, and afterwards converted into that of hero. But as his declamations against the oppression of the nobles, were founded upon true representations, and were daily proved by new examples, and the remedies pointed out by Nicholas, were so easy to be tried, his prayers failed not in producing a general effect. When he saw minds sufficiently disposed for the revolution, having made sure of some of the most faithful, who were to commence it by seconding him, he caused the people to be invited by the sound of a drum to meet without arms before the church of San Angiolo, in order to regulate the affairs of the government. The meeting was very numerously at-

and surname is combined in another person, it appears strange that the author, in order to avoid suspicion, should indicate it. The present short account is taken from that history.

tended. Nicholas came out of the church, armed, with his head uncovered; having on his right the Bishop of Orvieto, in order to confer a religious respect upon the enterprise, surrounded by one hundred of his most faithful, and moved on towards the capitol. The three standards, of liberty, justice, and peace were borne in this political procession. In the first was Rome sitting upon two lions, with a palm in one hand and a globe in the other; in the second, St. Paul, with a naked sword; in the third, St. Peter, with the keys. They were followed and encouraged by the uninterrupted applauses of the innumerable populace, who always hope for something from innovations. From the balcony of the capitol he harangued the people with his accustomed eloquence: all applauded, and regarded him as the reformer of Rome. The noble Romans, thunderstruck by so unexpected a revolution, remained timid and tranquil spectators. Stephen Colonna, however, who was the most powerful among them, having returned to Rome, feigning to despise Nicholas, intimated to him to leave the capitol immediately, or he would order him to be thrown from the windows; but upon the ringing of the great bell, the populace hastened furiously to the palace of Colonna, and Stephen thought it prudent to fly to Palestine. The most powerful nobility received an intimation to retire from Rome, and silently obeyed: Nicholas was declared tribune, under which title he made wise laws with the approbation of the people and administered justice with the most scrupulous impartiality. He regulated the finances, restored the public revenues which had been dilapidated, and established a permanent military force for the preservation of order in the city. When the authority of the government appeared to him sufficiently secured, he recalled the nobles to Rome, who,

although they came to witness their own humiliation and the triumph of the people, dared not to disobey ; and the Colonnas, the Orsini, the Savelli became confounded with the crowd, and obliged at times to have recourse to the tribunal of that man, whom they had laughed at as a buffoon, or despised as a fool. Pope Clement VI., who had been a spectator from afar of this singular event, either applauded it or feigned to do so, and confirmed Nicholas in the title of tribune. The change he effected in Rome in an instant is incredible. He was, in fact, the master of the city : but not only he abused not his power, but watched day and night over the execution of those laws, which he had caused to be promulgated, and upon the proper execution of which the public safety depended. No individual could be exempted from them ; the life of the most abject individual was alike protected with that of the greatest signior. Justice was inexorable : no previous sanctity of character, no privilege claimed by sacred places, could protect malefactors. Agapito Colonna was arrested in the street for debt. Martin Orsini was accused, among other crimes, of having plundered a vessel that had been wrecked at the mouth of the Tiber ; was convicted after a short, but public, process, led to the scaffold, and hanged ; neither the splendour of his house, nor his two uncles, who were Cardinals, could save him from an infamous death. Such an event was sufficient to deprive any culprit of hope of pardon ; not only the city, but the country took another aspect ; the roads, which had been constantly shut up and infested by robbers, were re-opened ; travellers and pilgrims could visit in safety either sacred or profane monuments, and the agriculturists returned to their former labours. The tribune received the most honourable testimony of the integrity with which his trials were con-

ducted in the appeal made to his tribunal, in the most celebrated cause known at that time, respecting the crime of which queen Jane was accused by the king of Hungary. The prudent tribune declined offering an odious opinion.

The ideas of Nicholas, however, were too rash to be confined to Rome alone. He conceived the project also of uniting all the states of Italy in one federative republic. His eloquent letters were carried to the republics and sovereigns, who were to form the confederacy, by messengers, who, in imitation of the ancient republican simplicity, travelled on foot with white wands in their hands. The Italian people saluted them with benedictions wherever they passed. Five ambassadors of the tribune came to Florence, inviting the republic to the confederacy, and calling her by the title of daughter of Rome*. They were highly honoured by the Florentines and the aid of one hundred horse was sent the tribune, with offers of granting him further assistance at the first request. If a period has ever existed in which the imaginary project could have been realized, that period was the present, when Italy divided into so many small repub-

* The tribune must have entertained great respect towards the Florentine republic, because he had seen her act according to his principles. We have already seen that the Roman people had consulted the Florentine constitution. Gio. Villani, lib. 2. cap. 50, relates that the tribune had caused ensigns to be worked for the cities that were to join the confederacy. One with the arms of Julius Cesar he consigned to the syndic of Perugia; another for Florence, upon which was an old woman, sitting in the figure of Rome, and before her stood a young woman upright, with a map of the world in her hand, representing the figure of the city of Florence, who handed it over to Rome; and made her call if there was any syndic of the community of Florence; and not being any, he caused her to be handed to others upon a stick, and said: "He will soon come, who shall take it in proper time and place."

lican or monarchical fractions, was in a state of continual warfare; the little interests of these still smaller sovereignties, clashing against each other, daily gave rise to disputes which finished with recourse to arms. These small states in certain measure resembled savages, who, placed in a state of nature, terminate their disputes, not with equity and reason, but with an appeal to force *. The utility of the social compact consists in every individual renouncing a part of his natural liberty in order to place it in the hands of a senate, or of a sovereign, who may always have in view the advantage of the greater number to which the lesser may be occasionally sacrificed, which yields, either of good or bad will, to the laws in society, when, without them, arms would be had recourse to. All the small fractions of government, into which, at that time Italy was divided, might mutually have yielded some pretensions for the common good, and united, have formed a body capable of rousing the public spirit, the love of country, and thus liberate Italy from those foreign invasions which had continued to be the cause of her unhappiness for so long a period: but the project of the tribune evaporated in an imaginary vision. The difficulty encountered in the execution, the vices he discovered from being inebriated with success, soon put an end to the reform. In the time of his prosperity, however, revered and dreaded both within and without Italy, he had the boldness to summon the two pretenders of the empire to the tribunal of the capitol, Ludwig the Bavarian, and Charles of Bohemia, who had caused themselves to be styled Emperors. Finally, he

* Cum prorseperunt primis animalia terris
Mutum, et turpe pecus glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus, et pugnis dein fustibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ post fabricaverat usus.

HOR.

intimated to the pope and cardinals, who were sojourning in Avignon, to return to their ancient seat.

Among the few persons of his age, who nourished the same visionary projects, Francis Petrarch may be mentioned, who was full of thoughts upon the ancient splendour of Rome*, which had been further inflamed by his coronation in the capitol, amidst the applauses of the Roman people, a spectacle which presented to his eyes an image of the triumph of the ancient heroes. He had got acquainted with Nicholas in Avignon, and had probably incited him to the enterprise, as he attests in the letters he wrote to him. Nicholas, who had been thus stimulated to the undertaking in prose, might have expected to have been praised for its execution in verse. For a long time it was thought that one of the most sublime songs of Petrarch, full of reflections upon the ancient grandeur of Rome, and of future hopes, was addressed to the tribune; but his biographer has proved, that the conclusion of it is not applicable to him†.

* The fine song, *Italia mia*, &c., shews the manner of thinking of the poet. The mistake made upon this song by his learned and diligent biographer, L'Abbate de Sade, is singular, who thinks that the bodies of the parents of Petrarch, born out of Italy, had been transported there. It is founded upon these words:

Non è questi il terren ch' io toccai pria,
Non è questo il mio nido,
Ove nudrito fui sì dolcemente ?
Non è questa la patria, in ch' io mi fido,
Madre benigna, e pia
Che copre l' uno, e l' altro mio parente ?

It is strange that the learned author has not perceived that these words are placed by the poet in the mouth of all the Italians, as reflections to rouse them to the common defence. It is singular, even ridiculous it would be, to think that the Italians should be moved because Italy contained the ashes of the parents of Petrarch.

† *Rime I*, p. can. 6. *Spirto Gentil*, &c. Petrarch had got

The atrocious death of the King of Naples had called the King of Hungary into Italy to revenge it. He was the son-in-law of the emperor, who was also considered ready to march into Italy; and, united, they would certainly have got possession of it, since the greater part of the kingdom of Naples, divided by parties and irritated at the cruel death of Andrew, was well disposed towards the King of Hungary, and acknowledged his rights. The arrival of foreign armies had always proved a scourge to Italy, and it became necessary to offer incense to the idols, who were dreaded. The Florentine republic, therefore, sent an honourable embassy of ten gentlemen to the Hungarian king, amongst whom was Thomas Corsini, doctor of law, who was intrusted with the address*. He spoke in Latin,

acquainted with Nicholas at the court of the pope in Avignon before he became tribune, and finishes the song,

Digli; un che non ti vide ancor d' appresso, &c.

Therefore, the song cannot be adapted to the tribune; but there was not a person whom it could suit: and if it was written to that Colonna senator of Rome, whom De Sade conjectures, Petrarch swelled his eulogy too much. I have a singular opinion upon this article. As all the parts of the song are wonderfully adapted to the tribune, I think it has been written for him; but on account of the subsequent vicissitudes, the project having failed through the follies and vices of the tribune, the poet changed the end of it by addressing it to another, a liberty not rare among poets. My conjecture gains greater force, since Petrarch confesses to the tribune that he had prepared a lyric composition for him, and that, if he did not change his conduct, he would convert it into satire. "*Hanc mihi necessitatem durissimam exime, ne lyricus apparatus tuarum laudum, in quo, teste quidem hoc calamo, multus eram, desinere cogatur in satiram.*—Epis. Famil. lib. 7. epis. 7.

* It appears that this oration was very much esteemed in that time, John Villani having taken care to translate it, and to report it at length with the following title: "Embassy recited in the presence of the King and his Council, by Messer Tommaso Corsini, in grammar, with many other Latins." The style, however, is ostentatious and far-fetched.

that might well be understood by the king of a nation familiarized with the use of that language. He reminded him of the ancient friendship and alliance that had subsisted between his royal ancestors of Naples and the Florentines, and added whatever he could mention in an embassy of formality. The Bishop Visprimense replied to him in the same tone in the name of the king, accompanied with the greatest protestations of friendship. The expedition of the King of Hungary into the kingdom of Naples was attended with a happy issue. The hatred against Jane and her new husband, the discord which prevailed amongst the royal princes, the love of novelty, paved the road for him into that kingdom. The people vied with each other in following him wherever he went, and the conquest of that country resembled rather a march than a state of warfare. Jane did not wait for him at Naples, but embarking upon a galley, made sail for Provence; and her husband, seeing the revolution against him almost finished, embarked also on board of a small vessel, in company of his counsellor and
1348. friend, Nicholas Acciajoli.

This illustrious Florentine deserves to hold a distinguished place in history. Born in a commercial republic, and intended for commerce, he had received from nature the most elevated talents. He was sent at an early age by his father to Naples, where the house possessed considerable property. Nicholas, however, soon insinuated himself into the good opinion of the court. Endowed with a lofty genius, able in penetrating the recesses of the human heart, master of his own passions, and cool in displaying them, he possessed a natural eloquence better adapted to draw men over to his sentiments than study and artifice. These mental advantages were adorned with those of the exterior: a high stature, strength of memory, and

a majestic air, qualities fitted to promote the success of the former; to all which he united a great ambition. He captivated the Princess of Taranto, the widow of Philip,, brother of King Robert; and the amiable qualities of Nicholas were not the last to contribute to it*. She was called the empress of the East, a vain title which she bore in dowry from the house of which she was born†. She availed herself of the assistance and counsel of Nicholas in the management of her states, and the education of her three sons. He attached himself particularly to Louis, the youngest; and from that moment became almost the only guide and support of that prince in the midst of the various vicissitudes which attended him. Acciajoli, indeed, is not mentioned in the tragic death of Andrew; but if the boy Louis and the mother, as fame reports, had so great a share in it, Nicholas cannot be exempted from all suspicion. Queen Jane loved this young man. Hardly was Andrew dead, when Acciajoli thought of taking advantage of that passion, and making the fortune of Louis by marrying him to her. The queen was prepared, but Louis made objections and felt scruples from their near relationship, and first desired a dispensation from the pope. Acciajoli, knowing how important the moment was, and seeing the danger of delay, conducted him to the nuptial ceremony almost by violence‡. Pope Clement VI. ratified

* Giov. Vill. lib. 12. c. 74.

† Summ. His. di Nap. tom. 2. lib. 3.

‡ The words of his panegyrist are stronger: "Nicolaus nil tuti in procrastinatione cognoscens, assentiente regina, adolescentem in aulam regiam adducit, ibique remotis arbitris, eum venientem manu laceratque deprehensum ad genialem thorum perduxit: sic conjunctione prius facta, et matrimonio inde publicato Clemens tunc pontifex fieri posse concessit. Nicolaus igitur Acciagolius per hunc modum adolescentis matri carissimus factus et reginæ merito acceptissimus uni-

the matrimony, and Acciajoli became, after the sovereign, the most important personage in the kingdom. Being obliged to fly, he disembarked with Louis on the Siennese coast, from whence they repaired to his country-seat of Montigufori. Although the family of Louis of Taranto was so acceptable to the Florentines, his brother and uncle in the service of the republic having been killed in the battle of Montecatini; nevertheless the dread of the Hungarian arms not only prevented them from paying honours to him, but the entrance into Florence was even forbidden him. The Bishop Acciajoli alone went to meet him, and Nicholas, who knew the esteem, in which his moral virtues were held at the pontifical court, persuaded him to accompany them. All three embarked at Porto Pisano, arrived in Provence, and afterwards proceeded to Avignon. The two royal exiles might have foreseen their fate, had they fallen into the hands of the Hungarian king, from that which attended the Duke of Durazzo, who was murdered in Aversa by the hands of that monarch, and thrown from the same terrace on which the unhappy Andrew was strangled. The amiable qualities and the valour of the duke, caused this act to be looked upon by many with horror*. The other royal princes were imprisoned,

versum regnum suo fere jure regebat.—Matteus Palmerius de Gestis Nicol. Acciajoli. Matt. Vill. lib. 1. cap. 9.

* That king had given a safe pass (*salva condotta*) to the royal family of Naples, upon the condition, however, that they had taken no share in the death of his brother. He received them joyfully, kissed them, invited them to dinner, and after dinner, made this cruel execution of the Duke of Durazzo. Matthew Villani asserts, (*Cron. lib. 1. cap. 14.*), that the Duke of Durazzo was innocent of the death of Andrew, and the suspicion alone fell on him of having aspired to the kingdom, by having married Mary, sister of Jane, who, from state jealousy, had been condemned to celibacy. In the discourse

and led into Hungary, together with the young Charles Martello, son of Jane and of Andrew, who shortly died.

In the mean time, however, the two consorts having taken shelter in Provence, the ancient inheritance of Jane, were successful in their enterprises; governed by the wisdom of Acciajoli, who was well acquainted with the intrigues of the court of Avignon, he knew how to reconcile her to his sovereigns. Pope Clement VI., to whom, for the small sum of 30,000 florins in gold, Jane had sold the city of Avignon, confirmed the matrimony, and declared her husband King of Naples. Acciajoli, having obtained the protection of the court of Avignon, and sufficient money by his credit, prepared a fleet to conduct the sovereigns back into their kingdom. He, however, moved first, and went to sound the feelings of the Neapolitans, whom he secretly endeavoured to irritate still more against the government of the Hungarians, by reviving their attachment to their ancient masters. When he saw the enterprise mature, he called them to Naples. They embarked with a number of troops upon ten Genoese galleys, which they had hired, and arrived happily at Naples, amidst the applause of their old subjects. The royal couple had

which the King of Hungary held to the unfortunate duke before the execution, quoted by Dominico of Gravina, (*Cron. Rer. Ital. Script.* tom. 12.), among the reproaches, that of having been an accomplice in the death of his brother is not met with, although we would not with begging sophisms (which become the most evident proofs in the mouth of an armed and enraged king) take the refusal of his coronation by the hand of the pope as a cause of the death of Andrew, of which the king accused the duke of having proofs in his hand. (*Giov. loco citat.*). There are, however, many uncertainties and contradictions in these events, and the celebrity of Queen Jane would deserve that a learned man, upon authentic documents, should diffuse a little light, by writing her life.

regained a good part of the kingdom, when the King of Hungary re-appeared, and disembarked with a large army in Manfredonia. The war was carried on between the two kings with various fortune. The pope offered his mediation. The King of Hungary was tired of an expensive war and of absence from his kingdom: he accepted, therefore, the mediation, and more willingly received the sovereigns of Naples. The pope was elected pacific arbiter of the dispute, which had been handled with arms, viz., whether Jane was guilty or innocent of the death of her husband: if guilty, she was to cede the kingdom to the King of Hungary; if innocent, remain the queen of it, and pay the Hungarian king 300,000 florins in gold for the expenses of the war. The latter having made a compromise, left Italy. The pope, as all prudent men had foreseen, under the formalities, only, of a solemn trial, absolved the queen from a crime, for which all impartial historians and posterity have condemned her. The coronation of the two sovereigns succeeded the absolution. It was performed by the hand of the legate; and that unhappy kingdom reposed in a transient moment of peace. The only occurrence of note in this event was, that the King of Hungary, either through pride, or foreseeing the difficulty of exacting it, refused the stipulated sum. Not only the kingdom of Naples, but a great part of Sicily was obtained for those sovereigns by the interference of Acciajoli. During the agitations which disturbed that island, he repaired to it with six galleys, some arms, and many provisions, of which the country was in need, and brought back Palermo with many cities and castles to devotion towards his sovereigns. By his industry the troops of the king took possession of the castle and the city of Messina, and almost all the island

was subjected, when Acciajoli was recalled upon the arrival of Charles, King of Bohemia, who was much dreaded. Nicholas, being sent ambassador to him at Sienna, displayed great ability in gaining his friendship towards his sovereigns. Hardly, however, had he left Sicily when that island rebelled ; he returned, put himself at the head of the troops, and by his skill, influence and seducing manners, succeeded in regaining the greater part of it. Thus the ability of a single individual was sufficient to carry into execution, what neither Charles or Robert, who were so much more powerful than Louis*, were able to succeed in.

* Mattei Palm. de gestis Nicol. Acciajoli.

CHAPTER V.

DEARTH AND PESTILENCE IN EUROPE.—PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPENED IN FLORENCE AND PISA.—THE VISCONTI MARCH AGAINST THE FLORENTINES.—SIEGE OF SCARPERIA.—DISSENSIONS IN PISA.—AGREEMENT OF THE FLORENTINES WITH CHARLES, KING OF THE ROMANS.—CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN SIENNA.—CIVIL AGITATIONS IN PISA.—DISSENSIONS BETWEEN THE FLORENTINES AND PISANS.—TYRANNICAL LAW MADE IN FLORENCE AGAINST THE Ghibellines.

WHILST two political events were keeping a small part of Europe in agitation, two of the great scourges of nature, famine and the plague, were contributing to depopulate a considerable portion of the globe. The ravages produced by the latter were probably augmented by the horrors arising from the former. The unceasing duration of deluges of rain, during the seed-time of the year 1346, had either partly prevented the sowing, or the seeds had been carried away by the waters to an extent that, in the following year, scarcely a fifth part of the ordinary crop had been produced. This misfortune was general over almost the whole of Europe*, and was

* Stor. Pistol. "In the years of Christ 1346 and 47 there was a great dearth in all Christendom to a degree, that many people died of hunger, and the mortality was great in every country of the world, &c. The chronicle of Bologna (*Rerum Ital.* tom. 18.) says: "In this year the greatest dearth happened in the remembrance of man; many persons were killed by the pressure around the house in the market, where the corn was sold. . . . among the poor were seen many young men dying, and children in the arms of their mothers, and a great foam came out of their mouths, and this I, writer in San Jacopo of the hermitan friars, was an eye-witness to."

cruelly felt in Florence, where, in spite of the provisions made by the government*, corn rose to an exorbitant price†. The precautions taken by the magistrates for the making of bread, and for the distribution thereof at the ringing of a bell, is a proof of the extraordinary scarcity that prevailed. Two coarse loaves of meal, from which the bran had not been extracted, were daily distributed to 94,000 persons, at four denari each: great numbers of peasants, who could obtain no livelihood in the country, had flocked to the gates of Florence, where bread was given to them, nor was the number of poor smaller, who were nourished by the charity of the wealthy Florentines‡. This dreadful calamity, which took place

* The community of Florence ordered from Sicily, Sardinia, Barbary, &c., 40,000 bushels of grain, and 4,000 of barley; but this supply was stopped at the mouth of the Arno by the Pisans, who were in want of the same, and only about one half arrived in Florence: they sent for provisions also from other parts, and the community was furnished with 26,000 bushels of grain, and 17,000 of barley. Vill. lib. 12. c. 72.

† At a golden florin the bushel. Vill. loc. cit.

‡ From various dates, which are found in the description of this dearth by John Villani, we may infer that the population of Florence was far greater than that which the diligent writer of the Decimo, &c., has supposed; since the persons alone to whom the common bread was distributed for money, exceed his computation by about a fourth part. It is true that Villani adds that many people had assembled from the country, but all the wealthy persons, who, in that period of flourishing commerce, lived in Florence, (as Villani mentions,) did not feed of this bread, but of a superior quality. All the societies and poor, who lived upon these persons, were not comprehended. Besides which, it is to be considered, that in times of high price the poor feed as little as possible; and the two loaves of six ounces each, which were distributed to the 94,000 persons, may be supposed to have served for a greater number. The provisions that the Florentines had sent for, of 40,000 bushels of corn and 4,000 of barley, prove the same; since we must add thereto the production of the soil, which

in the year 1347, was succeeded by one still more horrible, the plague, which penetrating into the finest countries of Europe, spread itself into Tuscany and Florence, and destroyed a great part of the population. This disease has always taken its rise in Africa, and particularly in Ethiopia and Egypt. The moist and warm air that generally prevails, the innumerable animal and vegetable putrefactions, which occur in those countries, are the principal causes of the plague*. Ancient historians describe it to us as originating in Africa. Villani considers the present arose in Asia towards China, from whence it extended itself through Africa and Europe: as, however, the description is accompanied by strange incredible circumstances†, the place whence its origin is inferred, is probably erroneously given, and

was a fifth part of the ordinary crop, and the provision of private persons, who, either by commercial speculations, or by foresight, in a city of so much commerce, provided themselves. Finally, the writers of the pestilence of the following year, agree in telling us that about 100,000 persons died. Even admitting an exaggeration, the population of Florence must be reckoned above 100,000 souls.

* See the treatise upon the plague by Doctor Mead, who, among the causes, mentions that of the great number of locusts, who, dying in this country, putrefy, and infect a great extent of country. The assertion of Mead is confirmed by other observations made in Italy. See *Diarium Parnense* (tom. 22. Rer. Ital. 1478,) where it is related that an immense number of locusts came upon the Mantua territory, which comprised a space of about thirty miles in length, and four in breadth towards Brescia, which, when dead, infected the air, and produced a pestilential fever. The same is recounted by Bernardino Corio (Milanese Tales:) (see Rondinelli of the Contagion of Florence;) a contagious poison, therefore, appears to be propagated by the putrefaction arising from these insects.

† Gio. Vill. lib. 12., relates that a fire came out of the ground, or from heaven, which consumed every thing, animals, plants, &c., for many days, that it rained snakes and worms, and had infested the air.

Mead is of this opinion*. Learned physicians have noted the similarity found between the plague, and the fever called the hospital fever, or that which arises in the summer in marshy places subject to putrefactions, such as the sea-shore. The causes, indeed, are the same, and the symptoms are very similar; pustules and swellings, red and livid spots are found in both, and the fever vulgarly called malignant, is not free from contagion. I leave it to sage physicians to decide whether the plague possesses any particular character

* Of Plague.—At this time the plague existed also in Africa, and particularly in Egypt. It was not easy for Villani in that age of ignorance, in which historical criticism was not known, to decide with precision upon the accounts which came from afar; and to fix, therefore, whether that plague had first arisen in Africa or in Asia. Besides which, all ancient historians describe this disease to us as particular and indigenous to Africa, as, for example, Thucydides, in his celebrated description of the plague of Athens, and Pliny. Procopius and Evagrius too, make mention of one of the most terrible plagues ever known, perhaps, in the annals of the world, in the year 543, under the Emperor Justinian; this arose in Egypt between Pelusium and the Serbonian Lake, and extended itself in two directions east and west; perhaps there was not a place known in ancient geography into which it did not penetrate, having lasted fifty-two years, and destroyed more than half of the human race; it was, at that time, preceded also by a great dearth. The plague generally breaks out at Great Cairo every year: this is a very populous city and filthy to the greatest degree, having narrow streets and small houses, inhabited by poor and dirty rabble, in the midst of which runs a canal, which receives its waters from the overflowings of the Nile: All the dirt of this very large city is thrown into it; when the inundation of the Nile is over, it becomes dry, and the filth remains with a little stagnant water: the great heat and damp foment, and increase the putrefaction to the greatest degree. Whoever may wish to laugh at the extravagant ideas formed upon the cause of the plague of 1348, may read the opinion of the college of physicians of Paris, mentioned at the bottom of the Istor. Pistolesi.

and nature, which distinguish it altogether from other fevers as the small-pox, and whether it differs only in being a stronger putrid poison. It is certain, however, they have sometimes been confounded together. We know, too, that the unwholesome nourishment the people are obliged to take in times of excessive dearth, produces an epidemic fever of the kind called malignant. If the plague, therefore, be introduced into a population, that has already received the seeds of pestilential fever,

the evil must be increased, beyond measure. This ^{1348.} unfortunate combination of evils occurred precisely at this time in Florence, in the rest of Italy, and in many other countries of Europe. We have already said that, in the preceding year, one of the greatest dearths afflicted Italy, when the mercantile vessels of the Genoese, the Catalans or Pisans coming from the Levant, brought the plague, and communicating it to humours sufficiently prepared for an epidemic, spread it throughout Florence and Tuscany*. John Villani, who has given us a description of the commencement of it, was not able to finish it, as he became himself a victim to it.

The celebrated John Boccaccio, one of the fathers of the Tuscan tongue, was more fortunate. He had retired from the city with a select society, to breathe salubrious air upon delightful hills, passing his time in mirth and gaiety, far from the sight of the general calamities in which the town was involved †. The manner in which

* This plague lasted in Europe five years : it had already existed in the Levant in the year 1346, and, in these five years, had traversed France, England, Italy, and Germany.

† Although the retirement into the country with the fair society may not be an invention, it becomes a pretext for writing the Decamerone.—See Essay the second, page 114. Boccaccio was not in Florence in this year ; his testimony, therefore, is not without exception.

this society passed their lives, recounting by turns novels, anecdotes, and spirited mottos, has given birth to a book, considered the most respectable in the Tuscan language. From the history of this malady, which serves as a preface to the Decameron, we learn, that it had been attended in the Levant with an hemorrhage from the nose and mouth, the fatal symptoms which discovered themselves in that of the year 543. In Florence, swellings appeared also either in the groin, or under the arm-pits, and afterwards in other parts of the body: these swellings were succeeded by black or livid spots, which as soon as they were visible in the arms, legs, or elsewhere, were considered a certain sign of death taking place within the third or fourth day. The dropping off in a few days, of whole families; the number of the dead, who were daily borne through every street to the burial-ground, had filled all ranks of persons with such horror, that both public and private affairs became suspended; the fields, in great part without labourers, were left untilled; and the ripe crops wasted upon the straw; whilst the authority of the laws being no longer exercised, an unbridled licentiousness reigned amongst those miscreants, who, undaunted amidst the mass of calamity, chose this season to give themselves up to their extravagant propensity to crimes*.

It appears that since the pestilence, in the times of the Emperor Justinian, which was the most fatal in the

* The observation of Boccaccio, that amidst the terrors of the plague a number of persons were found, who thought only of giving themselves up to pleasure, wishing, as it were, to profit of the few moments that remained to them, was made also by Thucydides, in the plague of Athens. Thus we see officers and soldiers make merry on the evening before a battle.

memory of mankind, there has not been a greater*. In the space of about six months, from March to September, during which the evil lasted in all its rage, 100,000 persons were said to have died within the walls of Florence; which number, although it may be exaggerated, even as an exaggeration becomes an argument in support of its extent†.

* Boccaccio tells us of an accident very difficult to be believed, (but if he was not in Florence, he could not have been an ocular witness,) that would prove the malignity of the pestiferous poison. Two pigs having thrown themselves upon the rags of a poor man who died of the plague, which had been thrown into the street, and having seized them with their teeth, after shaking them several times around their snout, in a short time dropped down dead of poison. Mead asserts that the plague was communicated to dogs, by pouring into them the bile, blood, or urine, of the infected: a person, however, has not failed to tell us, that in the plague of Marseilles, two dogs, who frequented an hospital, greedily devoured the glands torn from the infected, and that they not only remained unhurt, but even grew fat.—Rozier. *Journal de Physique*, &c. But the facts mentioned in a place, deserve a more severe and critical examination, where they have proceeded to assert, that the plague is not contagious; so uncertain are the medical assertions, (upon the plague of Marseilles, Paris, 1786.) The first time that the plague penetrated into England, was in the year 1483, in the return either from France, of Harry VII., or of some soldiers from Rhodes, who had been there at the siege of the Turks. An island, which had had but little communication with dangerous places until that time, must have been more easily protected from this evil, which more frequently attacks countries nearer to Egypt.

† First, Boccaccio, afterwards Macchiavello, and the diligent Ammirato, give us that number; the latter adds that about 600 a day died. If this number was the medium, and was to be taken for constant, in the space of six months we should have 108,000 persons dead. They may not have been so numerous every day, since in battles, and in pestilences, the love of the wonderful usually leads to exaggeration: but we shall still have a very large number. Matthew

Strange vicissitudes of fortune must have occurred to the survivors from the death of so many of the inhabitants; the poor for a time wholly disappeared, and the very large sum of 350,000 florins in gold, left them by the dying, remained for a considerable period fruitless, and was finally applied to the wants of the state. A rich and industrious city, however, like Florence, must very soon have filled again with inhabitants, when commerce and manufactures, the foundations of her riches, which attract the needy on every side, were still flourishing, and a short time afterwards, indeed, we find neither the commerce nor power of Florence diminished; and upon the renovation, as it were, of the human generation in the city, a desire appears to have been manifested, of taking greater care of their instruction, as a public college was opened, and eight citizens^{1349.} were deputed to govern it. Among the latter, was Thomas Corsini, who had been already ambassador to the King of Hungary, and was appointed one of the Professors of Civil Law. The college of Pisa had been opened five years before, which proves mankind to have

Villani says, that three parts out of the five of the inhabitants of Florence, were wanting; whence the population appears to have been greater than what some modern writers have believed. (See the author of the *Decima*.) Nothing is more uncertain than the ancient population of the various cities, and of the number of the dead in this plague. Sienna was certainly less populous than Florence, nevertheless it is said by Angiola di Tura, who survived, that the dead in that city and suburbs amounted to 80,000.—See *Cron. Senese*, *Rer. Ital. Script.* tom. 15. The *Chronicle*, too, of Fecini, says, that out of ten, nine died; others, that three fourths were wanting. An anonymous chronologist asserts, "They have said, there was a great mortality throughout all Tuscany, and at Sienna that counted 60,000 souls, remained alive only 15,000." From all which, great uncertainty may be inferred, but at the same time the great number who died.

been already awakened for some time from their long lethargy of ignorance*.

By the expulsion of the Duke of Athens, the Florentine government had lost almost all its states; but it recovered a great part of them more by mildness than by force. San Miniato had surrendered to the Florentines some time ago: Colle and San Geminiano, ^{1351.} tired of domestic discords, returned into their possession this year, and in the following year, the Florentines obtained Prato in purchase for 17,500 florins in gold, from the sovereigns of Naples, by the interference of Nicholas Acciajoli. By the same means, they might have acquired Bologna. To a republic of merchants gold was the most natural means of conquest, and with that purchase they would perhaps have warded off, and contended with greater courage against, a new storm, which, since that of Castruccio and Mastino, was thickening around them on the side of Lombardy.

The Visconti family, after various vicissitudes, and the fall of the Torriani, were become masters of Milan; and had received such an accession of power, and increase of splendour, under Matthew, Azzo, and Luchino, that, in spite of the temporary calamities suffered under the dominion of the Bavarian emperor, they were become little inferior to royalty. Upon the death of Azzo, his uncles, Luchino, and John, had been proclaimed rulers. The second, who was probably acquainted with the ferocious character of his brother, and the danger he was exposed to, left the principal direction of affairs to him, and concealed himself in obscurity amidst the pacific occupations which his archbishopric afforded him. Ambition, however, had discovered ^{1351.} itself even under the dress of moderation, by his

* Matt. Vill. lib. 1. c. 8. Amm. lib. 10.

coveting, or at least not refusing, the honour of the cardinal's cap from the antipope Nicholas V.; after whose fall, however, he resigned that eminent post, but was created Bishop of Novara, by Pope John, of which he became master, and afterwards Archbishop of Milan. Upon the death of his brother Luchino, he finally assumed the reins of government, and together with the talents and political qualifications of his brother, displayed a superior greatness and generosity of character. He was active, ambitious, and enterprising; to these qualities he united a power and dominion capable of making all Italy dread him; because, as well as Milan, many of the principal cities of Lombardy and Piedmont, Cremona, Lodi, Parma, Piacenza, Brescia, Monza, Bergamo, Como, Asti, Alessandria, Tortona, Alba, Novara, Vercelli, Bobbio, Crema, many places and castles in the mountains which extended even into Germany, were subject to him. In Bologna the Pepoli ruled, but knowing they were unable to maintain themselves in it, sought to sell it: the Florentines, had they acted with promptitude and activity, might have gained it, but deceived by the stupidity, and probably the treachery, of the agents they employed, they lost the opportunity, and the city was sold to the Archbishop of Milan*, whose power by this new acquisition threatened Florence with slavery, as he possessed also, in Tuscany, Cortona, with other castles. The tardy operations of the Florentines, by which they had failed in the acquisition of Bologna, occasioned the loss too of Serravalle; because, having obliged the Pistoiese to receive a Florentine garrison, in order to prepare themselves on this side for the defence, and delaying to place one in that

* Matt. Vill. lib. 1. cap. 67, 68, 69.

castle, that depended upon Pistoia, it was surprised by Oleggio, captain of the Visconti, in Bologna. His hostile views were discovered, after the death of Mastino, upon it being known that, instead of renewing the league of the republic with the Lords of the Scala, Can Grande II., son of Mastino, had joined in a confederacy and relationship with the archbishop, by his nephew Bernarbo having married Beatrice, daughter of Mastino.

The slothful inactivity in which the Florentines continually remained, was finally roused by the information of the people of Visconti approaching Pistoia. The terror increased when they perceived, that the archbishop had secretly gained the greater part of the nobility, who possessed castles bordering upon the Florentine dominion, viz., the Ubaldini, the Tarlati, the Pazzi, the Ubertini, who, impatient of the restraint placed upon their overbearing conduct by the republic, readily joined her enemy, and began to lay waste the territory. Firenzuola was burnt by the Ubaldini, and Monte Coloreto taken*. The Florentines were still more astonished when sending ambassadors to Oleggio, who commanded the arms of the archbishop, in order to ask him the reason of the war, they received for answer, that his master, who was no stranger to the internal broils and factions which prevailed in the republic, wished only to occupy Florence to put the city in order†.

In the mean time, either that he did not think the enterprise of Pistoia very easy, or hoped to spread greater consternation in Florence, he repaired to the neighbourhood of this city with the troops, where he caused more terror than mischief; because, beginning to

* Matt. Vill. lib. 2. c. 6.

† Ibid., cap. 8.

want provisions, he found himself soon obliged to retire. The Florentines who were at Pistoia, had already broken up the roads, and fortified the passes, which made the retreat on this side very difficult. Oleggio had no other choice, therefore, than the road of Mugello by the valley of Marina; and if that narrow and difficult pass had been immediately occupied by Medici, as Jacop Fiore, who was captain of the Florentines in Mugello had ordered, the troops of Visconti would have found themselves in the greatest difficulty. The tardy conduct of Medici, however, proved their salvation: whilst the peasantry alone, provided with few other means of offence than stones, harassed them greatly in that passage*. When Oleggio had rescued himself from the pass, he hastened to Mugello, and laid siege to Scarperia, which, from the importance of the place, had been well provided and fortified. The same Jacop Fiore, a brave German captain, defended it, and was ready to maintain it with his last drop of blood. The Perugians were expected to assist it. They marched for the Aretine district in security, as there was a Florentine garrison in Arezzo; but having halted two miles distant from the latter city, they were attacked and defeated by Peter Saccone, who, with the Bishop of Arezzo, and the Pazzi of the Valley of Arno, (Valdarno), endeavoured to make a division in this part in favour of the arms of the archbishop. That ferocious man, whose great age had not at all lessened his courage, and but little his strength, imprudently pushing forward in the first assault, was taken prisoner; but, being liberated by the Brandogli, who had left Arezzo in the time of the action, came into battle again with renewed energy, and

* Matt. Vill. lib. 2. cap. 10, 11, 12. Amm. Ist. lib. 10.

completely defeated his enemies. This accident prevented any vigorous succour being afforded Scarperia, and Visdomini and Medici were only twice successful in introducing troops and provisions into it by night, by deceiving the vigilance of the enemy by stratagem and courage. This castle was the barrier of the Florentine states, on account of its vicinity with Bologna, and it was of equal importance to the former to maintain it, as it was to Oleggio to conquer it. After forty days spent in painful and vain attempts to get possession of it, he determined upon making the last. Three assaults were made, and were repulsed with like vigour. In the first, they fought upon a mine, which had been excavated by the besiegers, in order to destroy the walls, according to the custom of the times*. A countermine was made by the besieged. The workmen employed upon the mine came in contact with those of the countermine, and attacked each other; the besieged became the conquerors, and the mine was choked and filled up. Nor did Oleggio meet with greater success in two other assaults that were made, the one by day, the other by night; he was always driven back, and filled with indignation, was obliged to retreat towards Bologna, leaving the defenders covered with glory, and particularly Jacop Fiore, John Visdomini, and John Medici†.

The archbishop, unable to conquer Firenzuola by force, endeavoured in the following year to do so by fraud. He was advised to it by the Ubaldini. The blow appeared infallible, as discord had been sown between the people of the place and the garrison. Many soldiers from various parts secretly approached it.

* See lib. 3.

† Matt. Vill. lib. 2. cap. 29, fino al 34. Pogg. His. lib. 1.

In different places the wood of the boarded fence which divided the two places had been sawed in two, when 250 of the most resolute, during a long night of the 27th January, penetrated into the place, and began to cry out, "Long live the natives, and death to foreigners." The garrison thought the natives had received succour, and timidly remained at their post, whilst the natives, considering it a deception practised by the soldiers, in order to murder or pillage them, both parties remained inactive a considerable time, which, if the enemy had taken advantage of, Scarperia would have fallen. The arrival of the succours, however, was delayed, and the trick being made known, the natives, uniting with
 135a. the garrison, drove out the enemy from the centre of the place*.

The storm which proceeded from the Visconti, had been somewhat dispersed, but not entirely dissipated. The Florentines were endeavouring to connect themselves in still closer union with the Siennese and Perugians. History, however, cannot omit mentioning one regulation which proved extremely injurious to Florence, viz., that of granting a liberty to the citizens, when they were obliged to do military duty either on foot or horse, of exonerating themselves by paying a certain sum, which contributed to pay the foreign troops. Thus military virtue began to be extinguished in a rich city devoted to commerce; the republic was placed at the discretion of foreigners; and frequently became tributary to those infamous bands of robbers, which disturbed the tranquillity of Italy for so considerable a period.

In the mean time, the Ubaldini in the district of Mugello, the Ricasoli in Chianti, and Peter Saccone,

* Matt. Vill. lib. 2. c. 55. Amm. 15. lib. 10. Pogg. Hist. lib. 1.

who had taken possession of San Sepolero, were molesting Tuscany. The dread of the Visconti kept the Florentine republic continually in agitation, which at times had recourse to the pope, at times to Charles King of the Romans encouraging the former to join them, and the latter to march into Italy. The pope, however, only temporized; and Charles was not in a condition to march. Upon the death of the pope, Urban VI. succeeded; and Visconti, probably seeing he would not be favourably disposed towards him, made at least a temporary agreement with the Florentines, and peace was concluded, in which all the lords of the places and castles of Tuscany which had declared
 1353. themselves enemies of the Florentines were included*. Such a peace, however, appeared not very stable. The Genoese having experienced a fatal defeat from the Venetians, were in the greatest consternation. The Florentines sent ambassadors to condole with them, and offer them consolation, indeed, in appearance, but in reality, to divert them from the thought of throwing themselves into the power of the archbishop Visconti, who carried on a correspondence for the occupation of that republic. Visconti got knowledge of it, and pretended that it was an infraction of the treaty of peace. Genoa, however, fell into his power: and thus the land force being augmented by the naval of so rich and populous a city, a fleet was equipped there, and the colours of the Visconti were seen waving afloat for the first time at sea. The Florentines, although instigated by the Venetians, chose not to renew so dangerous a war†.

1354. Charles King of the Romans, who had been so frequently and imprudently invited by them and

* Matt. Vill. lib. 3. cap. 59.

† Ibid., cap. 86.

other Italians to oppose the power of the Archbishop of Milan, arrived in Italy at the moment when the archbishop was dead, and three of his nephews had succeeded to his states. Dissension and war between them might therefore be anticipated. Bologna, too, by which the power of the Visconti gave them greater umbrage, soon fell into the hands of Oleggio, who, from being governor, made himself master of it, and the remedy became more dangerous than the principal evil. Charles arrived, armed rather with the title of Imperial Majesty, than the power; and therefore inspired greater
1355. respect than he created dread. The Visconti, against whom the Florentines, the Venetians, and their other enemies, had encouraged him, were no longer the same whom a nod of the Bavarian had deposed and imprisoned: their present power and riches far exceeded those possessed by the King of the Romans. Upon being invited by them to Milan to accept the iron crown, he found himself surrounded by the magnificence and luxury of the Visconti; loaded with their presents; and was surprised, if not alarmed, at the numerous body of troops, which either through policy or ostentation, they ordered to pass under his windows, making humble protestations to him that the whole were at his command. Having assumed the crown, and reinforced by troops, he proceeded towards Rome, and arrived on the 1st of January at Pisa, a city devoted to the imperial party. Ambassadors from the ruling party had been sent to him into Lombardy, who had promised him 60,000 florins in gold if he would confirm their privileges, and make no innovations in the government: Charles promised them this, and was therefore received with applause, and every demonstration of affection.

The city had been divided for some time into the

factions of Bergolini and Raspanti, names which, denoting voluble, and scrapers, the two sects gave each other in derision *. After the immature death of Count Ranieri of Donoratico, captain of the bands, and upon whom the government in great measure depended, very serious rebellions had taken place, in which the Bergolini had remained the conquerors, and Andrew Gambacorti with his followers almost lord of the city. The defeated party having gained fresh courage upon the arrival of Charles, excited various tumults by making him believe that the Gambacorti, who dreaded the diminution of their power, were the authors of them. The Gambacorti, perceiving their authority was about to decline, prudently thought of yielding to circumstances, and proposed to give the dominion over Pisa to Charles. The contrary party dared not contradict, and Charles took possession: but the cruelties his soldiers committed made the Pisans soon perceive their error; and the heads of the two parties, after having met in mature deliberation, came to meet Charles, giving him to understand that since peace had been made between them, the motive no longer existed, for which they had given him the command. Although this condition, whereby he lost the command over so powerful a city, was a serious consideration, he dared not oppose it; but only caused inquiry to be made of the people, whether the same was their wish, who replied with loud shouts of approbation. He then left the command, confirming anew the fourteen persons who had been elected to reform the city †;

* The enemies of Count Ranieri to speak ill of him with more frankness, had given him the name of *Bergo*; the latter afterwards from the accusation made against them of robbing the public revenues, were called scrapers, (*raspanti*).—Tronci. Ann. di Pisa.

† M. Vill. Cron. lib. 4. c. 45. 47, 48. 51. Tronci, Ann. di Pis.

ratified the privileges they were to enjoy, and elected the Pisans vicegerents of the empire in Lucca, Pietra Santa, Massa, Sarzana, and the whole of the Garfagnana.

Although the Florentines, in the mean time, were making preparations to send him ambassadors, in order to manifest every demonstration of friendship, they neglected no opportunity of holding themselves ready for every event; and that they might receive no laws from him, they placed themselves in a warlike attitude, ordered many of the walled towns to be fortified, and transported to them both provisions and property of value. All the soldiers were ordered to hold themselves in readiness, and not choosing he should approach Florence, they took other precautions upon the roads, adapted to oppose his passage*. Although the emperor's force was not sufficiently powerful to make him much dreaded, the Florentines must nevertheless have held him in considerable respect on account of the Ghibelline party, which, however humbled, still existed in the city, and was ready to declare itself at the first favourable opportunity. It was therefore resolved upon to send an embassy to him composed of individuals of almost all the cities of Tuscany in order to shew a greater strength in the union, but unfortunately it produced the contrary effect. The Florentine ambassadors, either accustomed to the republican tone, which was not much conformable with the humble and suppliant language an emperor and his courtiers required, or that they had received instructions from their government not to grant him obedience, or even shew sufficient signs of any homage they were to pay him, made use of expressions, which offended Charles and his courtiers, who

* M. Vill. lib. 4. c. 41.

were about laying hands upon them, had they not been prevented and restrained by that prince.

The Siennese ambassadors, however, and those of the other cities, with the exception of the Aretines, who remained firm with the Florentines, used another language, addressing him master, and offering him the dominion; and perhaps they were not displeased that the emperor humbled the Florentines. The latter wished to moderate the expression used by those of the cities subject to them; but they were answered by the sovereign that they were not children, who had need of the language of others in order to express themselves*. Having returned to Florence, and the emperor having sent his envoys there, an agreement was entered into after much deliberation upon the most important condition as usual; viz., that of paying. The republic was obliged to purchase the confirmation of her privileges and her security with money, and Charles exacted from her the sum of 100,000 florins in gold, and 4,000 annually during his life. Not a few citizens protested against the payment of this sum, declaring that Clement VI., in electing him King of the Romans, had made him take an oath that he would never molest the Tuscan communities, nor advance any pretensions, particularly against the Florentines†; as if it had been possible to summon armed powers before a tribunal, in order to make them keep these agreements. The greater part, however, agreed to the payment, and even accompanied Charles

* M. Vill. lib. 4. c. 54. Amm. 15. l. 11.

† M. Villani says that these letters of the pope were not produced on account of thirty florins' expense of the chancery not being paid, and thinks honestly that, if they had been laid before Charles, they would have prevented him asking money, as if pretexts were wanting.—M. Vill. lib. 4. c. 74.

obsequiously to Rome, uniting their flag (a thing not customary) with the imperial, and with that of a man whose grandfather had exposed Florence to the greatest danger.

Charles's passage and short stay in Sienna was the cause of a change in the government: this was administered by the order of the nine, as we have noted already and according to the institution of that magistracy, although the nobility and the lowest class were excluded from it, many citizens had a right to a share in it. A secret agreement, however, was entered into between ninety citizens, who intended their friends should hold the offices, and excluded all the rest by a plurality of votes*. Such a system, as usually happens in governments of the people, who are always lovers of novelty, had become very grievous; the more so, as they saw themselves limited to the choice of only a few individuals. The present rulers had offered the government of the city to Charles, which they had no legal power to do without the universal approbation. They had taken recourse to this expedient, in order to support themselves upon his arm, and great clamours and contradictions had taken place, when it became known, and the city was almost forcibly induced to consent to it. In this confusion of affairs Charles arrived at Sienna on the 24th of March. The lower orders of people rose with some of the principal families, the Tolomei, Malevolti, Piccolomini, Saracini, Salimbeni, at their head, who were enemies of the ruling party, and with the approbation of Charles, (who, being its master, had a right to change the government,) hastened to the palace of the nine, expelled the chief magistrate, whose life was protected by Charles, and burnt

* M. Vill. lib. 4. c. 61.

the poll-box, whence the new magistrates were drawn every two months: and, after having dragged it at the tail of an ass, declaimed in the most reproachful terms against the magistrate. The emperor then gave a commission to twenty individuals, composed of twelve citizens and eight nobles, to make a reform in the government, who ordained that the magistracy of the rulers should be formed of twelve persons from the classes of the people, four for every third of the city, who were to be changed every two months, and should take up their abode in the palace. Twelve gentlemen (*gentiluomini*) were afterwards added, to assist them in all their deliberations, without whose counsel nothing could be resolved upon,—and these twelve were called the college. Finally, a general council, consisting of four hundred individuals, was appointed, one hundred and fifty of whom were nobles, and two hundred and fifty from the classes of the citizens, from whom, whatever matters were deliberated upon, the final sanction was received.

The emperor had prosecuted his journey, and was crowned by the legate quietly in Rome, and leaving it the same day, not being obliged, according to the humiliating convention with the pope, to stay a moment after his coronation*, returned to Sienna at the end of April, and found the city agitated by the usual discords on account of rivalities and jealousies of government, which had broken out between the nobility and the people. He, therefore, thought it would be an easy matter to establish his natural brother, the patriarch of Aqueleia in the government of that city, which he readily obtained by the favour of the people, as the authority of the other magistrates was abolished. But it was not so easy for a dis-

* M. Vill. lib. 5. c. 2.

armed foreigner to hold the command over hot-headed citizens, who were accustomed to enjoy their liberty. Scarce had the emperor departed for Pisa when the people rose, and demanded a restitution of the magistracy of the twelve, together with the other administrators of the government. The city remained three days under arms, and the patriarch was finally obliged to yield, having sent in vain to ask succour from his brother at Pisa, who, finding himself in other embarrassments, ordered him to renounce the command. He departed, after the abdication, for Pisa, leaving the government in the hands of the same magistrates from whom he had taken it*. Either that the places belonging to the Siennese were attached to the fallen magistracy of the nine, or took this opportunity to free themselves from the Siennese dominion, many rebelled, such as Grosseto, Montepuleiano, which gave themselves up to the Perugians, Massa, which was retaken and sacked, together with many other castles; and dangerous movements were excited throughout the whole Siennese territory. To the three magistrates, a protector, (*conservatore*) was shortly after added, who was intrusted with the criminal power in peace, and was commander of the troops in time of war.

The emperor had found the Pisans not very contented, from the prevalence of an opinion that he wished to set Lucca at liberty, by taking away from them the dominion over it. The customary factions reigned there, in spite of the pacification they had boasted of to him; and the Gambacorti, a family of very rich merchants, continued to hold the principal share in the

* M. Vill. lib. 5. cap. 20. 29. 35, 36. Cron. Sanes. Rer. Ital. tom. 15. Malevolti Ist. di Sien. par. 2. l. 6.

government,—who administered it, however, with much wisdom by promoting commerce, and maintaining, as far as possible, tranquillity amongst the citizens. By their influence the emperor had been admitted into Pisa, as it was in their power to exclude him. His enemies had, from his first arrival, in vain endeavoured to ruin that family: they now began to employ the same machinations. Various accidents concurred to intimidate the emperor. The palace of the mayors, which he inhabited, had taken fire; he had been made to believe that some evil intention towards him was connected with this accident. Pisan soldiers being seen with their baggage returning from Lucca, after having consigned the Castle of Agosta to the emperor, the Pisans became confirmed in their opinion, that Lucca would be taken from them, and falling upon the Germans, killed several of them.

Whilst the mind of the emperor was thus held in suspense, and disconcerted by so many agitations, and dreaded an attack, the enemies of the Gambacorti persuaded him that that family were the authors of all these movements, because they dreaded a diminution of their authority, and that, if seconded by him, the city would rise against them. The deceived emperor lent himself to this act of injustice. If any of the family had shewn themselves during the tumult, and had called upon the people for protection, they would have experienced every favour, because the people were already hastening, of their own accord, to unite together in defence of their houses; but a timid inaction, which is the bane of parties in the execution of important actions, kept them concealed. Two of the family had concealed themselves with the cardinal legate; two others were with the em-

peror himself; a tumultuous people are easily made to believe any thing by daring villains, and both the people and the emperor were soon persuaded that the Gamba-corti were traitors. The principal individuals of the family were arrested and put to death; and their houses were pillaged and burnt*.

After having drawn closer the confederacy between the Pisans and the Florentines the emperor departed from Pisa. The celebrated Peter Tarlati, commonly called Pier Saccone, now near his hundredth year, finished a life which he had passed amidst the various agitations of wars and intrigues. Even down to the last year of his life he placed himself at the head of his bands, riding on horseback, and bearing arms as if he suffered nothing from the weight of years. It was not long since, coming from his own estates, he scoured the upper vale of the Arno, (*Valdarno*,) making depredations, and burning Figline with other castles. He was a bitter enemy to the Florentines, and was endowed, in a superior degree, with that ferocious valour, the character of the territorial lords, rather than with military talents. Upon his death-bed he revolved the same objects continually in his mind, and counselled his son Mark, instead of losing time in vain lamentations, when the enemy least expected it, to occupy the Castle of Gressa, belonging to the Ubertini; which, however, he was never able to effectuate†.

The emperor's departure had left Tuscany in harmony, since the Pisans had entered into a league
 1357. with the Florentines, what had rarely happened; and the confederacy was afterwards joined by the Sien-

* M. Vill. l. 5. c. 30, 31, 32. 37. Tronci Ann. Pis.

† M. Vill. l. 6. cap. 11.

nese, the Perugians, and some other cities. Soon, however, misunderstandings arose between Florence and Pisa. The latter city and her port formed an emporium for Florentine commerce, at that period so extensive, as it was the first channel by which merchandise was exported from Tuscany. Pisa was crowded with Florentine merchants and depôts, who enjoyed exemptions from duties. The Pisans, in order to increase the revenues of their own community, abolished those exemptions. The Florentines, after having reclaimed in vain to them and the emperor, not choosing to receive laws, took the unexpected resolution of abandoning their port, and entering into an agreement with the Siennese, that the Port of Talamone should be put in a proper state, they directed their commerce to it, and ordered all their merchants to abandon Pisa and her harbour. The government of Pisa perceived their error: the complaints made by the people of the loss of the profit they had derived from that commerce, induced the Pisan rulers to the strange and impolitic measure of endeavouring to commence a war with the Florentines; because if the ancient animosity were once roused anew, the Pisans would no longer think of profit. They tried every means to provoke them, therefore, by infraction of treaties, in order that the Florentines becoming the aggressors, the odium and weight of the war might not fall upon the Pisan government. The Florentines, however, who foresaw all, suffered with patience the aggressions even made upon their territory. The Pisans then annulled the law by which the Florentines had been exempted from the payment of duties; but even this made them not change their resolution. Nor were other stratagems sufficient to intimidate them, such as the

union with the Genoese, in order to oppose their entrance into Talamone*. Both parties, as usually happens in disputes, suffered heavy losses. The Pisans were left with the loss of their great profits, and the Florentines with the necessity of transporting their merchandise by a difficult, long, and expensive route.

^{1359.} The city of Florence had already been exposed to the civil tempests of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and these two factions had been alternately the conquerors and the conquered. Although they were finally reconciled, the Guelphan party remained the strongest, and a magistracy called that of the captains of the Guelphan party had been instituted, as has been already observed, which, moderate as it was at the beginning, became finally tyrannical. The eagerness, at all times, displayed for holding the offices, rather than the spirit of party, gave fresh animation to those odious names; the lower and new class of citizens, or those who had recently grown rich, obtained them more frequently than the others, because the individuals not being amongst those distinct classes which, for a certain time, were forbidden by the law, were sooner brought into employments. The great as well as the rich, amongst the classes of the people, instead of seeking a remedy for the disorder in the laws, if there had been need of it, or not thinking it easy to succeed, contrived a malicious method of excluding, under the pretext of their being Ghibellines, whoever they pleased; and this they carried into execution by means of the magistracy of the Guelphan party. The number of captains was four, two from the great, and two from the people: at this time, Guelfo

* M. Vill. lib. 6. cap. 19. 47, 48. 61. lib. 7. c. 32. 62,
Tron. Ann. Pis.

Gherardini and Geri Pozzi were of the former ; of the latter Thomas Brancacci, and Simone Siminetti : the framers of a measure which produced so many evils to Florence deserve to be particularly mentioned. They proposed a law that any citizen or Florentine subject, not really Guelphan, should, for the future, hold office in the republic ; upon being accused of being of the Guelphan party, and the accusation substantiated by six witnesses worthy of credit, they were either to be condemned to capital punishment, or in money, in case they were not able to convict the accusers of falsehood ; and if their lives were spared they were to be removed from every office and honour in the community. Such a law, besides the manifest injustice of it, opened the door to informers, to private revenge, and civil discord : the Gonfaloniere and the priors saw this, opposed it with energy, and prevented it ; but the party of the captains, being strengthened in the succeeding magistracy, finally overcame it ; the populace, gained by artifices, having hastened with loud clamours to the supreme magistrate, and obliged him to approve it*. It is very easy to see that such a law rendered that magistrate at once a despot over the republic, who became, even with the appearance of moderation, the arbiter at least of all the important offices, and held the exclusive right to them in his own hands. Knowing how important it was to accustom men to the yoke by soft measures, he began to execute the law with moderation, in order that the abuse might not be discovered too soon. This virtue, however, subsequently degenerated into the most cruel tyranny, the chief magistrate found no other resource in order somewhat to lessen

* Matt. Vill. lib. 8. cap. 24.

the arbitrary power, than to increase the number of the captains, by reducing them to six, adding two from the people, and fixing that nothing could be deliberated upon if three of the people were not agreed : a weak palliative indeed to so great an evil.

CHAPTER VI.

BANDS OF ROBBERS.—COUNT LANDO.—THE FLORENTINES OBTAIN BIBBIENA AND VOLTERRA.—TYRANNY EXERCISED BY THE CAPTAINS OF THE GUELPHAN PARTY.—WAR BETWEEN PISA AND FLORENCE.—THE PISANS ARRIVE UNDER THE WALLS OF FLORENCE.—DEFEAT OF THE PISANS AT SAN SAVINO.—PEACE CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE TWO REPUBLICS.—DEATH OF NICHOLAS ACCIAJOLI.—ARRIVAL OF THE POPE AND THE EMPEROR IN ITALY.—THE EMPEROR RE-ESTABLISHES THE FAMILY GAMBACORTI IN PISA.—THE FLORENTINES BESIEGE SAN MINIATO.—LEAGUE AGAINST BERNABO VISCONTI.—LUCCA RETURNS TO LIBERTY.—PEACE WITH BERNABO.—LEAGUE AGAINST THE POPE, WHO PLACES FLORENCE UNDER INTERDICT.—ARRIVAL IN ITALY OF THE POPE.—CHARACTER OF THE CARDINAL OF GENEVA HIS LEGATE.—DEATH OF THE POPE.—ELECTION OF URBAN VI., AND PEACE WITH THE FLORENTINES.

AS if the disasters had not been sufficient, which Italy was continually suffering, both from the invasions of foreign princes, from wars, and the intestine discords, which were so frequent in her ill-regulated republics, another scourge, which had arisen several years ago, now became intolerable; I allude to the banditti, which so much infested Italy. We have already observed, that instead of the citizens of the various republics taking up arms in their common necessities, they confided their defence to mercenary soldiers, who, when the war was over, remaining without pay, united themselves into bands called companies, and either sacked, or placed under contribution, whatever countries had not sufficient strength to resist them.

Lodrisio Visconti was probably the first who set on foot in Italy these bands of assassins, and his
 1358. example was followed by many adventurers. Some years ago, an army of these robbers, under the conduct of friar Moriale d'Albarno, which was very numerous and called on that account the great company, had laid waste many places of the Marche and Tuscany. Four respectable republics, Perugia, Pisa, Sienna and Florence, instead of exterminating them, had exposed themselves to the disgrace of purchasing with gold an unstable peace, but their chief met with merited chastisement. This man, who was decorated with the order of chevalier of Rhodes, was of Provençal origin; and after having served the King of Hungary, devoted himself to this infamous profession, and got possession of more than forty castles. After various vicissitudes, he went to Rome, apparently to assist the tribune, when the latter, having called him to him, served him with a process of treason, and ordered him to defend himself, which not having the means of doing, he sent him to be beheaded*. His followers, however, electing the Count Lando their new leader, twice approached the territory of the Florentine republic in the latter years; but were kept at a distance from it, from the passage of the state having been occupied by her bowmen, united to the Ubaldini, when they threatened to pass from the Mugello into the plain of Florence, by which the torrent diverted elsewhere, poured down upon Romagna: nevertheless, by the management of the legate of the pope, a large sum was to be paid to them by the republics of Florence, of Sienna, and Perugia, the power of which was more

* For all these events see Matth. Vill. lib. 3. cap. 89. 109. lib. 4. cap. 23.—Life of Cola of Rienso.

than sufficient to destroy them. Notwithstanding the many treaties however which were entered into, and the money badly spent, the Florentine republic got no quiet from them; nor was it difficult to foresee that the powers of Italy would render themselves permanent tributaries of these thieves; since, as they wished to live by their infamous profession, they were continually wavering from one side to the other, ready to serve the political views, or the vengeance, of any government, and always sold themselves to the highest bidder. It would have been the great and common interest to have opposed them with vigour, and destroyed them, but this consideration yielded to the petty interests of the moment. In spite of the last treaty which had been made, through the mediation of the legate, whereby they were not to molest the states of the republic for three years, being at Bologna, they demanded the passage in order to serve the Siennese, who had invited them to fight against the Perugians. After much controversy, the Florentine ambassadors agreed with Count Lando that the company that was in Val di Lamone should pass through a distant road from Florence to Marradi, proceeding between Castiglione and Biforco, Belforte, Dicomano, Vicorata, Isola, San Leolino, and Bibbiena; and the community of Florence was to order provisions to be prepared for them in the places indicated for five days.

The count began his march, the Florentine ambassadors remaining with him for security, which proved his salvation. They quartered themselves the first evening between Castiglione and Biforco. The robberies and other violences, committed on the road by the company, were so numerous, however, that the irritated peasantry, who were acquainted with the country, attacked them on the following day with such fury and success in the

narrow passes, that they ran the risk of being all cut to pieces. Count Lando, although brave in person, was badly wounded and made prisoner: about 1,300 horse remained in power of the peasantry; the slain were very numerous; the greater part of the booty, of which they had robbed Italy, was retaken from them; and had it not been for the danger the four Florentine ambassadors were exposed to, who, threatened with death by those thieves, commanded the peasantry to retreat under pain of incurring the indignation of the community, the whole of this *canaille* would have been entirely destroyed.

They arrived, however, towards the close of the day at Dicomano, where they fortified themselves. When this was heard of at Florence, an extraordinary council was assembled, and opinions became various. Many considered the time had finally arrived wholly to exterminate such a pestilence, and that they were not to keep their faith with those, who had never maintained it. It would, in fact, have been easy enough to have destroyed them, confined as they were in Dicomano, where they had only provisions for three days; and the hills upon the Sieve were taken by the Florentine bowmen, which left them entirely at the discretion of the latter: but the friends and relations of the Florentine ambassadors warmly opposed it. Middle measures were had recourse to, which are always of little utility; armed people were sent with an order to stand only upon the defensive, guarding the passes by which they entered into the Florentine territory, and they chose not to give them the provisions promised them; whilst, in the mean time, the commander of the Florentine troops, who was a German, either instigated by the ambassadors, or by friendship and compassion for his countrymen, escorted

them with four hundred horse into safety, amidst the indignation, however, of the whole country. So greatly was their march accelerated by fear, that in one day they made forty-two miles of road through difficult and steep passes, and fell upon the territory of Imola*.

This event proved only still more the meanness of the Italians in submitting to the excesses of these villains; since they might easily have destroyed them, had well concerted measures been resorted to. The injury they had sustained was easily repaired, as people of such a disposition are never wanting. Anichino of Mongardo, and the Count Suffo, the former already captain of the Siennese, and the latter of the Perugians, being now without employ, joined this band with many of their people, and considerably reinforced it †; when a defensive league was entered into to oppose them between the cities of Tuscany and the legate of the pope, at a time when it should rather have been offensive, by the union of all the states of Italy, which if they had been of one accord to deny them provisions, and coming

^{1359.} down in an hostile manner on every side upon such robbers, would have finally annihilated them. Count Lando, who had been ransomed, and was healed of his wound, breathed only vengeance. That the Abbot of Clugni, legate and vicegerent of the pope, had entered into an agreement for money with the band, will not appear strange, when we reflect that he had been already the mockery of Boccaccio, on account of his effeminate life ‡. But his successor, already known in Italy, equally for his vigour in war and wisdom in peace, chose also to pay these robbers the contribution

* Matt. Vill. lib. 8. cap. 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79.

† Matt. Vill. lib. 8. cap. 85.

‡ Decam. Gior. 10. N. 2.

of 50,000 florins in gold *; and Sienna, Pisa, and Perugia were again purchased with proportionate sums.

^{1359.} The Florentines alone, ashamed of so vile a tribute, refused and decided upon taking to arms. The Lombard Signiors Visconti, Carraresi, Estensi united themselves with them, and sent powerful succours which were very necessary since the army of Count Lando amounted to 5,000 horse, and 7,000 infantry. Even Naples sent the Florentines a small succour of three hundred horse, among which were twelve chevaliers belonging to the most distinguished families of that city†. A price also was set upon Count Lando as a thief and a perjurer, and 5,000 florins in gold were offered to whoever would consign him to them either dead or alive.

The army of the Florentines, hearing of the arrival of the enemy, marched under the command of Malatesta, who not long since had been chosen commander of the troops; and the two armies found themselves in front of each other at the Pieve at Nievole. The Count Lando, after many fruitless bravadoes, and having formally sent a challenge to the Florentines, thought not fit to give them battle, and remained firm in a position where he could not be attacked without disadvan-

* Matt. Vill. lib. 8. c. 103. lib. 9. cap. 6. 8. 20.

† The pique and hatred evinced, in order not to follow the same counsel, among the Tuscan cities, is proved by one fact. Upon the arrival of the Florentines being known, Count Lando went with 1,000 men to meet them. Orsino, who led them, having discovered the march of the count, saved himself in Spoleti, whence he was led safe into Tuscany. The Perugians, who had agreed with the company, and who held Spoleti, were so angry, that they sent an order to cut off the head of the Captain of Spoleti: which, however, the people of Spoleti did not permit.

tage to the assailants. Malatesta, however, ^{1359.} having reduced him to the dread of being deprived of provisions, he broke up almost in disgraceful flight towards Lucca, where he was not followed; the captain of the Florentines, wishing to avoid every opportunity of complaint that could be urged against him for entering upon another territory. These robbers were disheartened at the daring conduct of their enemies, and would no longer attack them *. The Florentines covered themselves with glory. Their captain was received into the city as in triumph, and the extraordinary pomp of the honours they wished to pay him, and which he refused from modesty, made him only still greater †.

To these prosperous events which attended the Florentines, others succeeded; first, by the acquisition of the small states of the family Tarlati, and afterwards, of Volterra. That family had been always an enemy of the republic, but in the death of Pier Saccone had lost its best support. His son Mark governed Bibbiena, together with many castles in the Casentino. Buoso Ubertini, as Bishop of Arezzo, made pretensions upon Bibbiena: he ceded it to the republic: this was the cause or pretext of his making war upon the Tarlati, who had not strength to resist the republic. They fought, however, bravely; the war lasted two months, and had it not been for treachery, whereby the Florentines were introduced into Bibbiena at night, this place would

* Matt. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

† *Contemptu Dominus splendior rei.*—HOR.

There were sent to meet him two great coursers, covered with scarlet and a rich canopy of gold raised upon spears with great hangings of royalty, under which they wished him to enter the place; but the captain accepted the horses, and refused the canopy; for which he met with great praise.—Matt. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 42.

not have fallen so easily. Mark, too, although surprised, defended himself with great valour ; but was obliged to give up the citadel from want of provisions. This event was the ruin of the Tarlati : because it drew along with it the loss of the Pieve San Stefano of Montecchio, and of the greater part of the other places belonging to this family *.

The republic got possession of Volterra with equal success. This city was agitated by intestine discords. Bocchino Belforte was master, or rather tyrant of it, a cruel man, who seeing he could not maintain himself in it, endeavoured to sell the city to the Pisans, but the party of the Florentines being stronger, Belforti was arrested, beheaded, and the city returned into the power of the Florentines †.

In the midst of all this prosperity, the internal evil, which consumed the republic, became every day more visible, viz., the tyranny of the captains of the Guelphan party. Their principal end in the law we have already detailed, had been to exclude from all employments the persons who were not friendly to them, and give them to their adherents. To declare the citizens incapable of civil employments, was called *admonishing* (*ammonire*;) and although they had begun to do it with moderation, having finally lost sight of all restraint, the number of the admonished increased greatly. It was difficult for the excluded, who thus became ill-disposed, not to attempt some revenge ; a conspiracy was set on foot (the thread of which had been planned some time before) by Ubert Infangati, whose father had been amongst the admonished more than ten years before. In this conspiracy they treated of making Oleggio Lord of

* Matt. Vill. lib. 9. cap. 61. 62.

† Matt. Vill. lib. 10. c. 67. Cecin. Ist. di Volt.

Florence ; but the treaty failing by the loss of Bologna, which Oleggio had incurred, was renewed by Nicholas Buono, and Domenico Bandini, who had been already *admonished*, and who drew into their party Bartholomew Medici, and many others particularly of the Florentine nobles. The plot was now renewed with Visconti, who, with ambiguous manners, neither accepted or refused the invitation. Bennarduolo Ruggo, a Milanese, who had been treasurer of Oleggio, and had managed this plot with him, was intrusted with it at present with the Visconti ; but seeing himself fed by the latter only with vain words, and wishing nevertheless to draw some advantage from the secret, gave the government to understand, that, if they promised him a premium of 25,000 florins in gold, he would reveal to them matters of great importance. The magistracy accepted the offer. In the mean time the treaty of Ruzzo, with the signiory, being known, Bartholomew Medici became intimidated, and unveiled the secret to his brother Silvester, who, taking him up sharply, discovered it to the Signiory, having first obtained his own pardon. The conspirators were arrested : Bandini, and Del Buono were beheaded, and the others banished. Ruzzo, having come late to Florence after the discovery of the conspiracy, received only, together with his companion, five hundred and fifty florins *.

Amidst the continual narration of so many crimes, it becomes the duty of the historian not to pass over in silence any of those virtuous acts, which are so rarely met with. The following is taken not from the sumptuous palace, but the humble cottage, and might serve as a theme for an interesting tragedy. A labourer of

* Matt. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 24, 25.

Scarperia having accidentally killed one of his companions, makes the crime known to his father, who advises him to fly. The father is charged with the homicide, and not attempting to deny it, in order that he might not discover his son, is condemned to death; upon which the son, hearing of it, appears before the magistrate, confesses the crime; and the magistrate, who for this rare contrast of virtue should have granted pardon to the culprit, has the cruelty to put the son to death. Historians, accustomed ever to pay little attention to virtue when not united with power or to illustrious rank, have not handed down to us the name of this virtuous and unfortunate family*.

^{1361.} An apparent peace was made between the Florentines and the Pisans, which harboured only a mutual enmity. The motives of this hatred were many, but the desertion of the port of Pisa by the former, five years since, was a particular one. The Pisans had frequently endeavoured to recall them to it, sometimes by stratagem, sometimes with open force, by arming eight galleys in the year 1357, which were to block up the port of Talamone, and force the ships which approached it, to make for the Pisan port, (Porto Pisano). The Florentines, in the following year, appeared at sea with ten galleys commanded by the Provencaux, which, freeing the port from every incumbrance, secured the liberty of their commerce. These beginnings of hostility by sea were followed by others by land* with secret warfare; the Florentines secretly giving succour to the Gambacorti exiles from Pisa, the Pisans to the enemies of the Florentines; until, after many reciprocal violations of treaties, they came to an open rupture, and the Gon-

* Matt. Vill. lib. 10. cap. 76. 83. 85.

faloniere Passavanti made the Florentines determine upon war. They marched with 1,500 horse, and 4,000 infantry*; entered into Val D'Era, under the command of Boniface of Lupo, a noble Parmesan, who, although he had been excluded from the supreme command, through the cabals of the counsellors, and Ridolfo Vararo was preferred to him, remained, nevertheless, second in command, and conducted himself valiantly†. The successes of the Florentine army were unvaried; many large castles were taken in the Val d'Era; the Pisans dared not shew themselves in the open field, until some of the captains, strangers to the service of the republic, pretending that their pay ought to be doubled, and the Florentines not granting it, left the army, and formed, (with their followers amounting to 1,000 horse,) one of the usual bands of robbers; which, hoisting a hat as an ensign, was called the company of the small hat, (*cappelletto*).

This inconvenience retarded the progress of the Florentines. The war by sea turned out successfully for them; they scoured the Pisan coast, doing much damage; took the island of Giglio, established a garrison in it, and arriving at Porto Pisano, broke the chains with which the port was shut up, and sent the pieces of it to Florence‡. The Florentines continuing their

* Astrologers were consulted; and according to their counsel the camp of Florence marched at twelve o'clock exactly, on the 20th of June; and the captain thought it a better augur to pass through Porto Rossa, than through Borgo San Apostolo. These circumstances are related with less credulous earnest by Villani, than by Amm. lib. 12.

† Matt. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 2, 3. 13. 15. 16.

‡ Part was attached to the columns of porphyry, already made a present by the Pisans to the Florentines; a part to the palace of the

hostilities by land, ill satisfied with Varrano, took for their leader Piero Farnese, who having led the troops to Bagno a Vena, came up with the Pisans, and routed them. They appear, however, to have fought with great animosity on both sides: the Florentine captain losing his horse, found himself in great danger. The leader of the Pisans*, together with many of his men, was made prisoner. The Florentines being reinforced, without paying attention to Barga, which was besieged by the Pisans, repaired directly to Pisa, and began a skirmish not far from the walls, which afterwards became a general battle, in which the Pisans were again defeated. The Florentines, in commemoration of the victory, and by way of insult, struck coin upon the Pisan territory†. Shortly afterwards, Farnese, repairing to Barga, and having almost suddenly assailed the besiegers, liberated that city. The captain enjoyed not long the fruits of the

government; and some to the gates of the city.—Matt. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 24. 30. Amm. lib. 11. Tronci Ann. Pis.

* It is reported that no other horses being found at that moment, he caused the saddle to be put upon a mule; and continuing to fight upon it, finally obtained the victory; therefore his statue in the cathedral of Florence is seen upon a mule, the work of Orzagna,—Amm. Ist. Fior. lib. 11. Matt. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 50.

† St. John was cut out upon it with a fox on the other side.—Vill. lib. 11. c. 54. Tronci Ann. The Pisans were denoted by the Florentines with this name.—See Dante, Canto IV. Purg.

*Trova le volpi sì piene di froda,
Che non temono ingegno che l'occupi;*

although persons have not been wanting, who have thought the fox put there as a symbol of the cunning of the captain, or his arms: certain it is, that, in his sepulchre, upon the helmet the fox is seen lying down. It is true also, that the two rival republics insulted each other frequently with coins and seals; thus the Pisans, devoted to the empire, made a seal in which the imperial eagle stands with his claws upon the Florentine lion.—Manni, Sigilli.

1363. victory: he died regretted; and was honoured with magnificent funeral obsequies by the Florentines, and his brother Rinuccio was substituted in his place, more in remembrance of him than from any fame for valour which Rinuccio enjoyed:

With the change of the general, fortune changed also. The Pisans had already taken into their service under the command of Albert a German, one of those bands of wandering robbers, called company of hand arms, composed in great part of English, whom the Gonfaloniere of the Florentines, from horror at such troops had disdained to take into his pay. This band was composed of 2,500 horse, and 2,000 infantry; to which 800 of their own horse and 4,000 infantry were added, under the command of Ghisello Ubaldini. The want of proper precaution in the Florentines, and the incapacity evinced by the commander, paralyzed their efforts. The Pisans became masters of the country. They first made inroads under the walls of Pistoia, and afterwards even under those of Florence, pillaging the neighbourhood without any one venturing to oppose them. The country and the villas at Campi and at Peretola were laid waste; and the enemy arrived even as far as the bridge of Rifredi, offering the usual insult of running races, coining money, and hung up three asses with the names of three Florentine citizens. The Pisan commander, Ubaldini, enjoyed the fruit of his victory but a short time, and died crowned with glory, as the Florentine had already done.

The Florentines, wishing to cancel the remembrance of these misfortunes, made greater preparations. They found themselves obliged also to take foreigners into their pay, and invited Pandolph Malatesta to command them; the same man, who, with so much valour and prudence, had first defended them from the robbers, had enjoyed

the glory of meriting triumphal honours, and had evinced his modesty by refusing them. Under the veil however of moderation, he concealed ambitious designs against the Florentine republic, of which, from the vicinity of the states, he hoped to gain possession. He therefore demanded an authority far more extensive than jealous republics usually grant to generals, and the power of interfering not only in the military but in the civil government. Being rejected by the ambassadors with disdain, he changed his language, and offered to serve the republic not as supreme commander, but as a volunteer both with arms and with counsel. This offer was accepted, and the eight of the war being created, no other general was elected, and they determined to avail themselves of him as counsellor; but, through his perfidious counsel and bad conduct, the war was carried on with little success. The Pisan army, under the new commander, Mometto of Jesi, united with the foreign company, entered by Chianti into the upper Val d'Arno, assaulted and captured Figline. The Florentines marched against the enemy, and encamped at Incisa: but the camp, by the malicious stratagem of Malatesta, was badly pitched, and too much extended; the number of the troops was also diminished by dismissing five hundred Germans as useless, commanded by Amerigone, who disapproved of his operations. Their inutility was the alleged pretext, as the company of the Cappelletto had been taken into pay. Malatesta himself too, who meditated treason, abandoned his post, betaking himself, under vain pretexts, to Florence, not choosing to be present at a disadvantage which he foresaw, and which he had himself prepared. The army diminished in numbers, and without a great part of its better troops, was therefore incapable of defending a camp of too large a circuit, and being attacked

by the Pisans and English, was easily broken, and Farnese taken prisoner. The castle of Incisa was taken, and the disbanded army fled towards Florence. Malatesta, who was marching to their succour with a body of troops, having fallen in with the fugitives, retreated also, and in his return, filled the city with terror: at the same time, the company of the Capelletto commanded by Nicholas Urbino, who left the service of the Siennese, was defeated and dispersed by the Pisans near Turrita, and their captain taken prisoner*. Malatesta was en-

1363. treated to take the general command of the troops;

but, keeping his views fixed upon the same intent, he again entreated of the government to join the civil power to the military, demanded that the soldiers should swear an oath of allegiance to him, with other pretensions, which sufficiently discovered his designs. These pretensions were denied him, but the difficulty of finding a proper captain at so dangerous a moment, or the blindness arising from confusion, caused the command to be given him with the usual limited powers.

The commander, intent more upon ruin than defence, placed the city in great danger, hoping to draw profit from their misfortunes. The enemy, loaded with booty, after having sacked the valley of the Arno with impunity, the country of Arezzo and the Casentino, wished to take shelter at Pisa; and that he might not be mo-

* Thus says Ammiratori, lib. 12.—Philip Villani, however, assures us that the company was attacked and defeated by the Siennese, with whom the Pisans were united. Malevotti (Istor. Sanese, par. 2. lib. 7.) says by the Siennese, led on by Francis Orsini. So many were the iniquities committed by the company upon the Siennese territory, that a body of the latter stood on observation, with the order, however, not to fight. It is not difficult to suppose that mutual insults made them come to blows: the Siennese, however, deposed Orsini because he had disobeyed.

tested in his march, caused false accounts to be spread amongst the Florentine army, that he was coming boldly to Florence, and that he would encamp the following day at San Salvi. This news being brought to the city, the people, badly armed, assembled without the gate at the cross, (Porta alla Croce). Malatesta arrived very late, and at the hour in which he thought the enemy approaching, ordered the gate to be suddenly shut as
 1363. a measure of security, with about 9,000 persons remaining outside of it, who would have been all either killed or taken prisoners, if the enemy had really arrived. This undisciplined band was thrown for some hours into the greatest disorder and dismay. A messenger arrived in the mean time announcing that the enemy were in march by the Chianti; which, greatly as it rejoiced the Florentines, disconcerted Malatesta, who was unable to conceal the sudden embarrassment into which he was thrown*. After this event, perceiving that his views were discovered he left the command, and Henry of Monforte was substituted in his place.

The Pisans, now masters of the country and conquerors, had as much reason to complain of their auxiliaries as of their enemies. Barga was again
 1363. attacked, and was bravely defended by the people of the place, by the garrison, and the Florentine mayor Buondelmonti; and the enemy was repulsed with great loss. After various attempts made by the pope to bring about a peace, the war recommenced with greater animosity. Both republics, confiding little in the valour of their own people, had introduced foreigners into their armies. Not less than six thousand horse and a very

* Philip Villani, lib. 11. cap. 67, 68, 69. 73. 75. The same writer was also at the Porta alla Croce, and minutely describes the disorder. Tronci. Ann. Pis. Amm. Istor. Fior. lib. 12.

large proportion of infantry were in the pay of the Pisans; the former, for the most part, were foreigners, under the command of two generals, Anichino Montgardo and John Auguto. The Pisans, who received their succours with less delay, were consequently more powerful than the Florentines, and kept a superiority over the country; whilst the Florentines, inferior in troops, carried on the war with much languor. The enemy, as usual, scoured the neighbourhood of Florence without opposition, and destroyed the villas; but what proves the little skill possessed by this soldiery, particularly in attacking walled places, is the assault given to the modern villa of the Petraja, called at that time the tower of the Brunelleschi, in the possession of that family. The Brunelleschi, having fortified themselves within it, sustained three repeated assaults from the English and Germans, who probably not choosing to lose the time which would have been necessary for them to gain possession of it by regular measures, abandoned it, to their own disgrace, and leaving that family covered with glory. The walls and gates of San Gallo and San Friano of the city were attacked, and a false alarm having been spread in the night, that the enemy had occupied the walls, the city was thrown into great confusion, and was exposed even to the ridicule and scorn of the enemy, who had caused the disorder by sounding their fifes and drums near the gate of the Cross (Porta alla Croce)*. The damage done the territory under the eyes of the Florentines was immense. These mercenary troops remained for a considerable time in the vicinity of Florence, and it was reported that a treaty had been made (nor is it difficult to believe it) by which it was agreed

1364.

* Philip. Vill. lib. 11. c. 88. 89. Cron. San. Rer. Ital. t. 15.

upon, that the Florentines were not to be molested for five months, upon conditions that they paid them above 100,000 florins: it is certain that they continued always retreating with no other advantage than what they derived from the devastations which were extended throughout all Tuscany.

Monforte, with the Florentine troops, probably certain by the secret convention of not being attacked, repaired with his people to the Pisan territory, and encamped at San Piero in Grado, burnt Leghorn and damaged the country: but fresh troops arriving to the aid of the Pisans, he was obliged to retreat*. The animosity between the two republics was now continually increasing. The Florentines, forgetful of the treachery used by Pandolph, again sought for a commander from the same family of Malatesta, and appointed Galeotto, his uncle, a general of some ability, of better faith than the nephew, but a man broken down by ill health, and whose infirmity of body allowed him not the use of his middling talents. He led an army of 4,000 horse and 11,000 infantry towards Pisa, and encamped in the suburbs of Cascina. The two armies met there. The Pisans, with their foreign troops equal in number to the Florentines, were much superior as they were commanded by the general John Acued, or Auguto, an Englishman, one of the ablest and most experienced officers of that age. Fortunately the want of activity and talent evinced by the Florentine general was made amends for by a captain, Manno Donati, courageous and foresighted, and whose military talents ought to have placed him at the head of the army, if the suspicious republics had granted him to their citizens. The confusion and negligence,

* Phil. Vill. lib. 11. c. 89, 90.

with which the Florentines encamped upon the banks of the Arno, made Donati foresee the facility of their being surprised. In vain he exposed their danger to the soldiers, who minded him not; but turning himself towards the general, who, lived retired on account of his infirmities, he conceded to Donati and Boniface Lupo a part of his authority. Having, therefore, fortified an important post near St. Sovino, with the Genoese bowmen, the best of troops, he made all necessary dispositions for defence and order. Their conjectures were not erroneous*. Soon after Arguto arrived with his people at St. Sovino, thinking to surprise them: but found unexpected preparations for defence. The Pisans and the foreigners were frequently repulsed.

Donati, in the mean time, who, with a chosen band, had taken another road, attacked the enemy suddenly on the flank: the Florentines then came out of their trenches in St. Sovino, from having been besieged, became the assailants, and threw the Pisans into disorder. Malatesta marched with his standard, although late, and completed the victory. The Pisans suffered a defeat considered very great for those times having about 1,000 killed, and 2,000 made prisoners. The Florentines, who a short time before had seen themselves almost besieged, made an extraordinary festival for this victory†. The prisoners were made to enter Florence with a kind of

* This battle has been painted by Michael Angelo. The subject was well adapted to his genius: many soldiers were naked because they bathed in the Arno, from which he was enabled to depict the various attitudes of naked limbs. The picture was to adorn the saloon of the old palace.

† It was ordered that, in memory thereof, an altar should be erected in Santa Reparata, and that the day of St. Vittorio, on which the battle happened, should be a holiday, and a race run.—Filipp. Vil. lib. 11.

triumphal pomp. The hatred between the two people was very great: nevertheless it is contrary to all historical probability that, instead of that moderation which generosity counsels every civilized nation to use towards oppressed enemies, those violent insults and low ridicule were offered to the prisoners, which a celebrated Florentine writer has asserted*.

To mutual hatred, however, the more tranquil considerations of prudence succeeded. Their contentions enriched the mercenary soldiery, who were paid by both parties, and exposed the republics to continual danger, by giving opportunity for the ambitious to form designs to rule over them. They began, therefore, to think seriously of peace which the importunate avidity evinced, and the tumults occasioned by the mercenary troops, accelerated. The pope had hitherto used every diligence to conclude it by means of his apostolic nuncios, the Archbishop of Ra-

* These insults are so villanous, that without naming them, I shall send the reader back to the author himself, that is, to Ammirato, *Istor. Fior. lib. 12*. The writer mentions not upon what he founds his narration; he only says that he has found it by him; it has, nevertheless, the air of one of those lying manuscripts of anecdotes, of which the houses of Florence have been always full. Philip Villani is the most respectable writer, because he was at that time living in Florence, and does not leave out in his tales the smallest circumstance: instead of receiving affronts, he says that they were well treated. "The prisoners were lodged in the prisons of the community as comfortably as possible, and were abundantly provided by good and charitable Florentine women, with all that they wanted."—Filipp. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 98, 99, 100, 101. Nor does Leonardo Bruni *Istor. Fior. lib. 8.*, make any mention of insults: they were only fined in order to pay for the building that large pent-house in the square of the priors, in face of the old palace, called also at the present day the lodge or pent-house of the Pisans. Poggio too, who appears to have copied Villani, confirms the same humanity shewn towards the prisoners.—*Hist. lib. 1*.

venna, and the chief of the Franciscans. A congress was opened at Pescia, at which the Florentine and Pisan ambassadors met, and among them Peter Albizzo of Vico, doctor of law, is worthy of being mentioned, who, upon being proposed as Lord or Doge of Pisa, nobly refused it. Secret intrigues were carried on in Pisa between the ruling party of the Raspanti to exclude the outlaws, and particularly the Gambacorti, from the treaty of peace, the latter of whom the Florentines, who in great measure gave the law, might demand to be restored to Pisa. The Raspanti dreading this, wished to elect a chief of their sect, and after having endeavoured in vain to tempt Peter Albizzo, John d'Agnello was chosen as Doge, who being supported by Bernarbo Visconti, to whom he had effected the cession of Pietra Santa by the Pisans, and having paid 30,000 florins to the armed people, was enabled to create himself Lord of Pisa, whilst they were treating in Pescia for the peace, which was afterwards concluded. The conditions thereof were favourable enough to the Florentines, since the Pisans bound themselves to pay 100,000 florins in ten years, besides the ransom of the prisoners, with reciprocal restitution of different places and castles. The Florentine populace, however, who were puffed up with a transient gale of victory, and were ignorant of the heavy expense and uncertain accidents attendant upon war, thought otherwise; and declaiming loudly against the Gonfaloniere Strozzi, it became necessary to protect him from their attacks, as he returned home privately*. Although the Florentine republic wore the air of con-

* Filipp. Vill. lib. 11. c. 100, 101, 102. Amm. Ist. lib. 12. Tronci Ann. Pis. Cron. San. Rer. Ital. t. 15.

queror, war had been alike destructive to both republics, and foreigners had been the only gainers*. These associations of plunderers, being suddenly thrown out of employment gave great inquietude to the whole of Italy; and various projects were set on foot to destroy them. The pope particularly frequently tried in vain to form a league against them; the Florentines either always opposed it, or at least refused to join it. Their motive for so doing was, that they had recently availed themselves of their assistance, and did not choose to irritate them; or they well knew by experience, that the republic, in all confederacies, had borne the greatest share of the burthen.

The Florentine historian ought not to pass over the memory of Nicholas Acciajoli, who died in this year, without paying the proper tribute of praise due to him. In the foregoing pages, we have already drawn a sketch of him; but in order to give a finish to it, we may be permitted to add that he continued, for the remainder of his life, to co-operate with his talents, and always advantageously, in the service of the sovereigns of Naples; by whom, above all others, he was honoured, and was appointed to the first post in the kingdom, that of high steward, with the donation of various cities and castles. And, in fact, he it was who had placed the crown upon the head of King Louis; when it was lost, he had restored it to both rulers; and when tottering he had saved it. As he was the first person in the kingdom after the sovereigns, and a foreigner, it is easy to
 1365. imagine what a war he must have been exposed

* It was said by some spirited Florentine, that both republics, after having thrown away a great deal of time, found themselves losers; and that the servants of the shop of the game had been the only gainers.—Amm. 15. lib. 12.

to from the envy of courtiers; but he was always very successful in gaining the advantage over them. At some periods, probably when he enjoyed less favour, he visited Rome*, and his native country, exposed to various fortune. Pope Innocent VI. honoured him with the sacred and honourable present of the golden rose; and knowing his talents, sent him to the legate, through whose means he carried on the war with Bernarbo Visconti, ordering him to follow his counsels. Acciajoli seeing the peace impracticable, directed the pontifical arms in such a manner, that the enemy was driven from Bologna, Faenza, Forli, and from all the places belonging to the church, and followed up even to Parma. At that moment he was recalled by King Louis, who, being sick, found himself in great consternation at the tumults excited in the kingdom, which was invaded also by a band of robbers led on by Anichino. Acciajoli found a remedy for every thing. Well acquainted with the disposition of those troops, he was enabled to prevail upon them to desert from Anichino, who was obliged to fly. Their remains had joined Louis of Durazzo, a rebel, and Acciajoli soon sent him prisoner also to his king. The Florentine republic, on the contrary, who honoured this, her own illustrious citizen, so long as he was absent, dreaded him to such a degree as soon as he was within her walls, that by a law, the severity of which was covered by a veil of far-fetched praise, she condemned him to an honourable ostracism, by excluding him from the principal offices of the state†. But notwithstanding this, so great a love bore he at all times for his native country, that in the war against the Pisans

* Buoninsegni, History of Florence, Book 3.

† Ammirato, History of Florence, Book 12.

(an. 1363,) when the Florentines were in search of ships, he sent into their service two galleys which he had hired at his own expense. After the death of King Louis, Jane, in the midst of so many enemies, as long as her frivolity permitted her to attend to the counsels of Nicholas, found not the best support. A perfect knowledge of the human heart, the most profound and extensive views in political affairs, dexterity in managing them, rendered him the greatest statesman of his time. He was not less formidable in the cabinet, than at the head of the troops. Intended for commerce, and not educated for great affairs, he became a politician and warrior almost by instinct, and is a new example among the many, how little education is able to achieve by the side of great natural endowments. Faithful at all times to his sovereigns, he accompanied them alike in their good and bad fortune. He survived King Louis only three years. He possessed great riches: was master of cities and castles both in the kingdom and in Greece. Pious and religious, he built churches and altars, had a predilection for the Carthusian monasteries, having restored that of Naples, and rebuilt that of Florence, the architecture of which, and even the disposition of the cells, were his design. Perhaps his spirit in the midst of the laborious agitations attendant upon great affairs, turned itself with pleasure to the contemplation of the life of those, who had retired from civil tempests into the port of solitude. He died at fifty-six years of age, and his bones which were carried to Florence, now repose in the church of the Carthusians which he erected*.

* Among the many Tuscan and Neapolitan writers, see particularly Mattei Palm. de Gestis Nicol. Acciajoli.

Italy now remained in suspense in expectation of the arrival of two personages, whose appearance was wont to presage disconcert and mutations. These were Pope Urban V., who after the long time Italy had not enjoyed the presence of the pontiffs, determined upon going there: the other was the Emperor Charles IV., who was invited too by the pope, in order that he might profit of his succour, and extinguish the power of the Visconti. In Lombardy this family was considered of the imperial party, because hostile to the pope, since priesthood and the empire had been always rivals. Sometimes, however, the pontiffs succeeded in dazzling the imperial power with religion, and making it serve their own ends. The pope arrived at Porto Pisano, was attended upon by the Pisan, Neapolitan, Venetian, and Florentine galleys, but neither disembarking there, nor at Talamone, he proceeded to Corneto, from whence he repaired to Viterbo*.

The Florentine republic, as one of the first states of Italy, and devoted to the Guelphan party, was
 1367. requested by the pontiff to join the league against the Visconti; but although she had paid him the highest honours, and attended upon him with her own galleys, he refused to enter into war. The return of the
 1368. emperor into Italy was neither more glorious to him, nor more profitable to the allies, than it had been at his first arrival. Always in need of money, he was a greater burthen to his friends, than a terror to his enemies. Bernarbo Visconti knew how to ward off the storm, with which he was threatened, by gaining with gold the good disposition of Charles, who, perhaps too, found this enterprise more difficult than at first sight it

* Siennese Chronicle.

appeared to him. The passage, therefore, of such a sovereign was always productive of revolutions. Pisa was one of the first cities to feel the effects of it. The emperor had arrived at Lucca, where he was met and received the homages of the Pisan Doge Agnello. It happened that, whilst he was standing at a wooden terrace, listening to the fooleries of a buffoon, the terrace broke down, and the Doge broke a thigh; upon which a report was spread in Pisa that the Doge was killed. The Pisans, tired of obeying one alone, set a rebellion on foot, from which the sons of the Doge, being unable to restrain it, were obliged to save themselves by flight, and Pisa returned to its former government of twelve elders or aldermen, six of whom were chosen from one faction, and six from the other.

Charles remained in Lucca spectator of these scenes without taking any part in them. He was afterwards received in Pisa with the usual testimonies of applause; demanded and obtained money; and prosecuted his journey to Sienna. In the mean time great disorder had taken place in this city. The gentlemen, united with many of their adherents, had driven the magistracy of the twelve from the palace, reforming the government, and reducing it to thirteen; ten of whom were of their order, and three of the ancient order of the nine. This revolution was effected without blood: the two parties, however, the conquered, and the conqueror, sent ambassadors to Charles to gain his influence in their favour. That of the people was the first who joined Charles and his followers: he sent Malatesta to Sienna as imperial viceroy with eight hundred horse. Upon his arrival, whilst the government were deliberating whether they should receive him, the people rising tumultuously, broke down the gate, and gave them

entrance. The nobles were then driven from Sienna with slaughter and their houses pillaged: a council was held of one hundred and twenty-four of the people called reformers, who again created the magistracy of the twelve, excluding, therefrom, the nobility, dividing it amongst the various ruling sects, that is five of the lesser people, three of the ancient order of nine, and four of the order, from which the five selected the twelve.

In the mean time the emperor continued his journey from Sienna, and after a short sojourn departed for Rome, leaving his vicegerent to interfere in the affairs of the parties, which were not yet tranquillized. The order of the twelve, which had kept the whole government in their own hands, were not much contented with the fourth part, and imprudently undertook to console the five of the lesser people for their loss, exclude the order of the nine, and divide amongst themselves the government. The common people, who had arms in hand, soon carried the change into execution; but seeing that, with the same facility, they could get entire possession of the government, they expelled from it not only the three of the nine, but the four of the order of the twelve; and, having made a new reform, fifteen were chosen to govern, wholly plebeians, the council of one hundred and fifty, still remaining, called reformers. The latter, however, fearing that at the return of the emperor, the two excluded orders who had sent agents to him, might, with the support of that prince, retake the government, in order to give them some satisfaction recalled them in part to it, by coming to the resolution that of the fifteen, three should be of the order of the nine, four of the order of the twelve, and eight plebeians. The reformers endeavoured to abolish these names, to extinguish with them, if possible, the factions, by calling the first, the

better people, the second the *middling people*, and the third the *greater people*.

Whilst the flame, kindled by the seditious, was still burning in the heart of the city; whilst the banished nobles throughout the country, with their followers, carried on war with the government, the emperor arrived. Charles, either gained by the order of the twelve, or middling people, or wishing to establish a government at his own will, in order to do so with greater effect, demanded that various fortresses belonging to the state should be consigned to him; this was denied him by the council general, which alone possessed the supreme authority. Nor did his request, that a new reform should be made in the government, meet with more favour. All that he obtained was, that the contests between the government and the nobles, who carried on the war as outlaws, should be referred to the will of the Bishop of Spire, and the Marquis Monferrato.

Whilst they were treating of this accommodation, the order of the twelve, or the middle people, seeing that this too would increase the force of the contrary party, and despairing of changing the government by stratagem, determined to have recourse to force; hoping that the emperor, persuaded thereto by the powerful family Salimbeni, would be in their favour. Having suddenly taken up arms, after having sacked the houses of many persons of the order of the nine, they hastened into the square, where Malatesta had appeared in order to support them with his armed people, and having driven three of the order of the nine from the magistracy, excited the emperor to leave the house Salimbeni, which he inhabited, promising him victory, and that he should have the city at his own discretion. The contrary party however, seeing that in order to maintain themselves,

it was necessary to fight, caused the alarm bells to be rung; whereupon a number of people, sufficiently animated, appeared, who attacking the twelve and the Salimbeni with a courage engendered by fury, put them to flight: They afterwards met the emperor with his bands, and assailing them furiously, the latter were dispersed, the imperial standard beaten down, and the emperor himself obliged to seek shelter by fortifying himself in his own house. Nor was Malatesta more successful: his cavalry, routed and stript, was obliged to fly beyond the city. About 4,000 horse were attendant upon the emperor and Malatesta, and it may excite our wonder that a numerous body of troops, accustomed to war, having so great an advantage over the populace, should be beaten. The common people led on by Matteo Ventura Mezani, remained victorious; he was captain of the people, a plebeian, but a man of sense and valour. Not content with the victory, he began to lay siege to the emperor in the palace Salimbeni, who found himself badly off without provisions, and with his soldiers either dispersed, stript, or prisoners, was consequently at the discretion of the Siennese*. The legate

* The Siennese Chronicle makes the most humiliating picture of it: "L'imperatore rimase solo colla maggior paura, e il popolo el guardava, ed egli piangeva, abbracciava, e baciava ogni persona . . . e cosi tremando, e' pareva smemurato, e moriva di fame, e volea andarsene, man non avea Cavallo, ne' denari, ne' Compagnia: onde il Capitano del popolo adoprò tanto che il detto Imperatore riebbe una gran parte de' suoi Cavalli, e 5,000 fiorini d'oro dal Comune.— "The emperor remained alone in the greatest fear, and the people looked at him, and he cried, embraced, and kissed every body . . . and trembling so, he appeared to have lost his mind, and was dying of hunger, but had neither horses, money, or troops. The captain of the people prevailed so far, that the said emperor regained a great part of his horses, and 5,000 florins in gold from the community."

of the pope, with some citizens of a pacific disposition, interfered to disentangle him from this bad situation. Conditions of peace were made, by which the emperor, leaving the government without any innovation, remitted every debt the Siennese owed the imperial chamber down to that day, and demanded only that they should pay 20,000 florins within three months; the property taken away from the soldiers was to be restored to them; and the emperor freely to depart. One difficulty, however, arose at his departure; viz., the want of money; the captain of the people so far prevailed that 5,000 florins in gold were given him, with which he took his leave*.

From the courageous and successful rebellion brought about by the Siennese, we have a lesson, what a people unaccustomed to warfare, but armed with natural valour, can effect against foreign troops; and Sienna, in this enterprise, covered herself with glory. The city, however, and the country remained exposed to tumults, and the outlawed nobles scoured the latter with hostile arms, making continual depredations. The Marquis Monferrato, who was left there by the Emperor to appease discords and settle affairs, tired out by the obstinacy of parties, went away to Florence, where he promised that he would settle the terms of an agreement. Seeing it, however, impossible to succeed therein, he threw off the burthen of so difficult a charge upon the Florentines, who, after many contradictions, and much opposition, pronounced a sentence on the last day of June 1369; the principal item of which was, that the nobles were to be restored to their country, and that they might take a part in all offices of the government, except in those of the Defenders Gonfalonieri and Counsellors. This agree-

* Cron. San. Malev. Ist. San. pag. 2. lib. 7. c. 8.

ment was accepted by the people; and thus that agitated republic had time to take a little breath.

The Emperor had marched towards Pisa; but hearing that the usual rage of factions reigned in that city, and the Pisan outlaws having made him believe that these factions were animated against him, intimidated by the recent events in Sienna, and passing ^{1369.} the Arno, he went to Lucca, where an embassy sent from the Pisans, and his vicegerent persuaded him of the good intentions that city felt towards him. The family Gambacorti, friendly to the Florentines, and well affected towards the Pisans, for fifteen years, in exile from Pisa, had been expelled by the influence of this same sovereign. Often had those, who had survived the conspiracy of the Raspanti, endeavoured in vain to gain re-admission. In the year 1360, the Pisan common people, being impoverished by the abandonment of their port by the Florentine merchants, and consequently discontented, and seeking a change of government, persons were not wanting, who endeavoured to introduce the expelled family, friendly to the Florentines. The priests and friars were the vain contrivers of this conspiracy; which, being discovered twelve only of the very numerous accomplices were hanged; the government prudently drew a veil over the rest*. Peter Gambacorti had made two other useless attempts with the aid of the Florentines; when, finally, this weak emperor, overcome by the Florentine gold, and by the family, had credit or influence sufficient to replace Peter Gambacorti with his usual principal authority in the government, thus healing the evil which he had himself occasioned upon his first arrival†.

* Matth. Vill. lib. 9. c. 78.

† This family was very much beloved by the Pisans, and it is remarked, that it was against their wish they had been expelled; they

^{1369.} This event had probably influence over another advantageous to the Pisan republic. Five years had elapsed since peace had been concluded between the Florentines and Pisans. The Florentines continued carrying on their commerce by the port of Talamone: both parties, however, desired that it should be re-established at the Pisan harbour, the road for bringing merchandise from Florence to Talamone, being inconvenient and ill-secure. What the interest of both parties requires is easily obtained, in spite of the ancient enmities, which time extinguishes. An agreement was entered into between the two republics, the principal and most important article of which was, that the merchandise of the Florentines might both enter and leave the Pisan port without paying any impost, in which treaty Peter Gambacorti, the friend of and protected by the Florentine republic, may be easily believed to have taken no small share.

During the whole stay of the Emperor in Italy, the Florentines had evinced a lofty conduct towards him, and had paid little attention to his demands and threats; finally, in order to get out of all embarrassment with him, they pacified him by paying him a sum of money. They chose not, however, that he should enter their city; and conceded that privilege only to some ladies belonging to the suite of the empress, among whom, it was believed, was the empress herself incognita. His necessities, together with the little power he enjoyed, rendered him not

were, therefore, received with great favour. See Cronica, Pis. Rer. Ital. Scrit. tom. 15. "The said Gambacorti, returning to Pisa, that is, Messer Piero, and Gherardo his brother, with their children, the same day a great festival was made in Pisa, that the bells all rung a Dio Laudamo, many children went out to meet them with olive boughs in their hand," &c.

greatly respectable; the princes of the empire were richer and more powerful; and it was probably known too, in Italy, that he had been stopped in a street at Worms, for debt, by a butcher, and detained in an inn, as pledge for the expenses he had incurred in it. The imperial crown, which was pawned to the Florentines for 1,620 florins, contributed no little in a rich city, and covetous of gold, to bring him into contempt*. This weak and poor emperor, is the author of the bull of gold, (*bolla d'oro*), and of the pompous ceremonials with which the imperial dignity is clothed; so true is it that weakness and ambitious poverty have need of cloaking themselves under a shining exterior.

^{1369.} San Miniato had rebelled some time ago against the Florentines, through motives of faction; and admonitions availing nothing, it was determined upon to lay siege to it. Bernarbo Visconti, against whom the Florentines chose not to unite themselves with the pope, began with little sense of gratitude, to molest them; first, as imperial vicegerent, intimating to them to retire, and upon his threats being despised, by sending his people commanded by Auguto to raise the siege. Then it was at the particular instigation of the Florentines, that a league was made between them and the pope, and the greater part of the Italian gentlemen against Bernarbo, whose people, conducted by Auguto, upon the Pisan territory, watching the time to bring succour into San Miniato, broke through the Florentines, whom they could have conquered with inaction, and chose imprudently to fight; nevertheless the siege was continued, and the city

* It was ransomed by the Siennese, otherwise he could not be crowned in Rome, the Empress having remained to await the end of this negotiation.—Cron. San,

even soon fell into the power of the Florentines. A native, of the place, named Luparello, concerted with the captain of the Florentines about the means to be employed in order to become masters of it. This man had taken notice in the walls of a dry walled-up gate, in a situation which was little observed: in the night he took down as much of the wall as to leave a hole sufficient for a man to enter at; and, whilst a furious attack was made in the morning, from the opposite side, in order to attract attention and the force of the city towards it, Luparello ordered as many soldiers to enter by the opening as were sufficient to overpower the place, which was conquered, in spite of a valorous defence. The ring-leaders of the rebellion were decapitated; other persons, belonging to the principal families, were declared rebels; and among the rest, Philip Borromei, from whom^{1370.} the illustrious family of this name derived its origin*.

Lucca, at this time, may be said to be neither enslaved nor free, and was governed in the name of the Emperor, by the Cardinal Monforte. She ran the risk, however, of falling into the hands of Bernarbo, who carried on a secret correspondence for the purpose; the Florentines, who dreaded him, paid the cardinal the sum of 26,000 florins in gold, and Lucca was declared free. Thus, after having passed, during the space of fifty-six years, through various vicissitudes, and into the hands of so many masters, she returned to the enjoyment of her liberty. This action, although brought about from the dread of Visconti, was not without deserving the praise due to generosity; since the Florentines sent able architects to Lucca to destroy the castle of Agosta, which had been

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 1. Amm. lib. 13.

built to keep them in subjection; they also sent armed troops to defend them, as well as counsellors practised in the current affairs of politics, as during the long slavery she had been subjected to, persons no longer were to be found capable of governing the city; and, afterwards, they received her as a free city into the league against Visconti.

Nor did an attempt of this man succeed better at Pisa, where he wished to restore his partisan Agnello, and expel the Gambacorti: his people, in the darkness of night, mounting the walls of Pisa, near the church of St. Zeno, were repulsed by the Florentines, who had been shortly before sent to it*. The projects of Bernarbo upon Tuscany being thus rendered futile, his people began to retreat; and the Florentines followed them up. Rodolfo of Varano had hitherto been their general, and had received the citizenship of Florence, in token of his merit; he was succeeded by Francis Orsina del Monte. The troops of Bernarbo laid siege to Reggio. Those of the confederacy marched to liberate it. One of the bravest of the Florentines, Manno Donati, who had so frequently distinguished himself fighting for his country, having become extraordinarily heated in the assault made upon the bastions, in which they were taken, met his death by a violent fever: this was no little loss to his country. He was honoured with a public funeral, and the Lord of Padua caused him to be painted in his hall, amongst the most celebrated of warriors†. This man being no more, and Orsino having also retired, the Florentines elected general one of their citizens, (which they were rarely accustomed to do) Rosso de' Ricci under no very fortunate auspices, for he

* Cronica Sanese, e Cronica Pisana, Rer. Ital. t. 15.

† Pogg. Hist. lib. 1.

was easily defeated, and made prisoner by Auguto. The equiponderated power being finally known by experience to both sides, and the danger being reciprocal, peace was concluded between Bernarbo and the confederates*.

The Florentine power, founded upon the riches which the extent of her commerce procured her, and which gave her a principal influence in the political transactions of Italy, caused the citizenship of the republic to be sought for by the principal lords and princes of the country. At this time, therefore, Francis Carrara, Lord of Padua; Francis Casati, Lord of Cortona; Niccolas, Count of Nola; Guido and Robert Counts of Soana, were admitted into it at their own entreaty; besides many others, who, after having carried on war, and rendered some service to the republic, obtained the same reward†.

External peace, however, was almost always prejudicial to internal quiet. Domestic discords began to rage again, excited by the tyranny of the captains of faction, who, after calumniating, and *admonishing* the citizens, excluded them from the government. The family and dependants of the Albizzi guided this conspiracy; and by every kind of stratagem succeeded in associating those families and heads with them who might prove an obstacle to their view. Some citizens, intolerant of the tyranny, having assembled to make head against them, were accused by the ruling faction of forming conspiracies: they appeared before their rulers with that boldness and courage which innocence affords, and, among the rest, Philip Bastari spoke with so much truth of the right they had to consult upon daily injuries,

* Leonar. Brun. Hist. Fior. lib. 8

† Amm. Ist. lib. 13.

that in spite of the power of the captains, the signiors ordered a bailiwick as a remedy, which, however, in its reform, confined itself to removing six persons for five years, from the public offices, three of whom were of the Albizzi family, and three of the Ricci. The source, however, of the calamities the republic was exposed to remained untouched; the tyrannical authority exercised by the captains of the faction was in full power, which, by continually irritating the people, ripened the seeds of inevitable seditions*.

In the meantime, a little war was carrying on upon the Florentine territory. The Ubaldini were, as
 1373. we have already seen, powerful lords in the Mugello, where, as well as upon the Apennines, they possessed many castles. According to the bad habits which were in use amongst those Castellan lords, who were more robbers than princes, travellers were frequently stripped, and not rarely assassinated: the excesses committed in these times by the Ubaldini, rose to a pitch that the Florentines thought seriously of destroying them. Troops were sent there first under the command of John Cambi, afterwards of Obizo Cortesia: Mainard, a chief of them, was taken, and beheaded; and fourteen castles

which belonged to them taken: thus their power
 1374. was entirely extinguished. A dangerous epidemic accompanied by a great dearth deprived the city of almost a sixth of her population: this is called plague by historians, who are often accustomed to confound them: the name, however, is proper only to the foreign contagion, transported to us from Africa, as we have already remarked in its proper place.

The Florentines, about this time, made a discovery of

* Ammir. Istor. lib. 13.

secret negotiations, by which the court of Avignon was endeavouring to oppress the republic. Perugia, on one side, was in the hands of the ecclesiastical government, and Bologna on the other: that court had endeavoured to occupy Sienna, and notice was received that the legate had entered into a treaty with the people of Prato, and despaired not of occupying Florence. Interest conciliates the fiercest enemies; the Florentines, therefore, made a league with Bernarbo Visconti to balance equally the ecclesiastical power*, and a tax was laid upon priests. Although the arms of the latter may have been always terrible, the Florentines carried on the war with others no less formidable, that is, with gold; by means of which they held secret correspondence in various parts with the pontifical subjects, and succeeded in a short time in making the cities of Castello, Perugia, Viterbo, Montefiascone, Todi, Gubbio, Forli, and Spoleto, rebel against them. The legate of the pope, the Cardinal of Saint Angiolo, a man of little understanding, ambitious of intrigues, without the capacity to conduct them, and who directed the threads of the present from Bologna, where he resided, saw all his plans disconcerted, and perceived the error he had fallen into of making himself an enemy in the Florentine republic. To crown his many misfortunes, he found himself without money, and consequently without soldiers, and was suspected by the Bolognese, of treating for the sale of that rich city with the Marquis of Ferrara; the parties hostile to him
 1376. therefore, uniting together, occupied the city with the aid and counsel of the Florentines, and the legate was obliged to retire†. A league was entered into between

* Cronaca Sanese.

† Cron. Bologn. Rer. Ital. tom. 18. Buonins. Istori. Fior. lib. 4.

Florence, Bologna, and the rebelled cities, and the Visconti.

The pontiff, alarmed at the imminent ruin to which his states were exposed, took into his pay, besides the band of Auguto, which he had kept for a considerable time, another, rendered infamous for assassinations and cruelty, that of the Breton soldiers composed of 6,000 foot, and 4,000 horse, commanded by John Malastretta, and Silvestro Buda. At the same time, however, hearing that many other cities were wavering in their fidelity towards him, he opened a treaty of peace with the Florentines, but with all the pride of threats, as his fiscal advocates in Avignon, published admonitions against them, and cited their principal magistrates to make excuses before the pontiff for having waged war. The Florentine magistrates were already hardened against the spiritual arms, which, as much abuse had been made of them in affairs merely temporal, by degrees lost all their terror. The Florentines, therefore, paying no regard to the admonitions, prosecuted the secret war, by which Ascoli too followed the example of the rebelled cities: nevertheless their ambassadors, Alexander Antella, and John Barbadori, appeared in Avignon, and being admitted into the Consistory, made a very plausible defence of their republic, exposing the secret correspondence carried on by the pontifical ministers to occupy their territory: the band of Auguto in pay of the pontiff coming down by order of the legate upon the lands of Tuscany, to whom, for security, they had been obliged to pay the sum of 130,000 florins; the provisions denied the Florentines in times of great dearth by the pontiff's minister, in spite of his permission; they then made an excuse for the rebellion of the city, by maintaining that it originated from the cruelty

and insufferable avarice exercised by the pontiff's ministers; and finally, that the Florentines had hitherto been the most faithful, as they were the most devoted adherents to the holy see. Every defence they made was in vain. In full consistory, in the presence of the Florentine ambassadors, the bull of excommunication was fulminated against the republic, condemning their souls to the pain of hell; their bodies to be killed, or sold as those of heretics; and their estates to be confiscated. Barbadori had the courage to turn himself towards a crucifix, and appeal to it, with a loud voice, as the true judge in the day of judgment of the injustice of the sentence: a courage as worthy of praise, as it was rare in those times*. In the rigour of this sentence, whoever had implicit faith in it, might, with good conscience, rob, imprison, and put to death the most honest and innocent citizens of Florence throughout the world: such was the abuse made in those times of the ecclesiastical power.

Pisa, at that time, was friendly to the Florentines, great numbers of whom lived there for purposes of commerce, and asked a licence from the pope to permit them to remain there without participating of the spiritual contagion: this was denied them; but the lust of lucre prevailed over the dread of interdicts†. The city was excommunicated, the divine offices taken away, and the devout failed not to murmur against the government, which wished to send new ambassadors to the pope to

* Annal. Mediolan. Rer. Ital. tom. 16. Pogg. His. lib. 2. Amm. Ist. lib. 13. Buonin. Ist. Fior. lib. 4.

† Cronaca Pisana, Rer. Ital. tom. 15. (Pisan Chronicle, Affairs of Italy, vol. 15.)

treat of an accommodation: but the pope was already too much exasperated, and breathed only vengeance. It became necessary, therefore, to make dispositions for war. It had been the custom, for some time past, when they wished to act with vigour, to choose eight citizens, who were called the eight of the war, to whom the management thereof was intrusted. Their labours were so well acceptable at this time, that by the public voice they were called the eight saints; a name more adapted to the ministers of peace, than those of war, and, what excites greater astonishment, given them at the time of a war with the pope, and of an interdict*.

Already the band of robbers, commanded by Malastretta, and the Cardinal of Geneva were approaching Bologna, where Ridolph Varano, elected general by the Florentines, had gone to defend it. The pontifical army having arrived at the walls of Bologna, where Varano, from his inferiority in force, kept himself prudently shut up, two Frenchmen of the company of the Bretons demanded to be introduced; and, having arrived at the square, accused the Florentines of treason, and challenged them to single combat, which was accepted by a young man, Betto Biffoli, a Florentine, and by a friend of his, Guido Asciano of Sienna. They fought under the walls before the army: twice Biffoli unhorsed the Breton with his lance, and at the third assault, getting upon him, was about to put him to death, when he granted him his life at the prayers of the legate, who consigned him the enemy as a prisoner; but Biffoli generously granted him his liberty. The Siennese also overpowered his adversary. Biffoli was highly honoured

* Buoninsegni, Florentine History, lib. 4.

by Varano, who made him a present of a beautiful silver belt*. The captain continually accused by his enemies of cowardice, and encouraged to leave Bologna, was always deaf, except to the dictates of prudence†. The secret arms employed by the Florentines began to subdue the mercenary bands; the heads of which secretly promised never to enter again upon the Florentine territory. The want of vigour, with which the pontifical war was carried on, obliged the pope to determine upon coming to Italy, in order to give greater animation to it by his presence. Both the pope and his court were greatly fatigued by the labours at sea of the vessels in which they were embarked, and in danger several times of being drowned, striking upon various parts of the coast of Italy, and among the rest at Leghorn‡. Amongst the most remarkable personages of his court, was the Cardinal of Narbonne, a cousin of the pope, who, stopping in Pisa, died there, and left behind him not less than 500,000 florins in gold, which are equal to about 3,000,000 of sequins of our times, a proof of the avidity and corruption prevalent in the court of Avignon§. The Florentines, in order to take revenge for the interdict, and make good the expenses occasioned by the war, ordered that, after deducting from the estates of the ecclesiastics what was necessary for

* Pogg. Brac. Hist. lib. 2. Buoninsegni, in his Florentine History, says that the girt was given him by the legate.

† His saying is memorable; when, by way of derision he was asked by his enemies why he did not leave Bologna, he answered: "Because they may not enter it."

‡ Cron. di Pisa. (Pisan Chronicle.)

§ So says Ammirato in his history. lib. 13. There may be some exaggeration in the treasure of Pope John, but exaggerations have always a basis of truth.

their support, the remainder should be sold. The pope arrived at Corneto, where hearing also of the rebellion of Bolsena, and that his affairs were continually growing worse, he would not have been averse to entering into agreement with the confederacy. The Florentines sent to him ambassadors who remained with him, and the pope sent his own to Florence; but only to irritate the people still more against the government. These were two monks, one an Augustin, the other of the minor friars. Knowing that the people were discontented at the interdicts, they requested to explain the motive of their embassy in public; and a numerous council being assembled, they declaimed with all the colours of rhetoric against (as they said) those few, who by their obstinacy opposed the public good, as the piety of the city of Florence, and her devotion to the holy see were well known to the pope. This seditious artifice was of no avail: an answer was given with firmness; and as the eight of the war were accused not indirectly, the magistrate declared how much the public was contented with them.

The pope found himself in the mean time in the midst of rebellions*. Nor is it to be wondered at that his subjects so easily rebelled, tyrannized over, as they were, by the ministers; who, from the distance of the court, could not be held in rein, suffering even cruelties, hardly credible, from the mercenary soldiery. The mind shud-

^{1377.} ders at recounting the horrible acts committed by these assassins in the pay of the father of the faithful. The character of the Cardinal of Geneva, his legate, was even more conformable with the cruel inclinations of those murderers, than their commander,

* Buoninsegni, Florentine History, Book 4, Ammirato, Book 13.

Auguto. Amongst other cities which had the misfortune to suffer pillage from those villains, Cesena was remarkable, from the acts of cruelty used towards her. Her citizens were continually tormented by the soldiers, who either would have all they wanted without paying, or repaid whoever complained with blows. In vain they appealed to the cardinal; till at last losing patience they armed themselves, and, rushing suddenly upon the Mercenaries, killed about eight hundred of them, and drove away the rest. The cardinal, hearing of this event, endeavoured to appease the city, and feigned to enter into an accommodation. At the persuasions of Galeotto Malatesta, and trusting to the vows of the legate, the people of Cesena were again induced to receive the soldiers, who were instigated by the perjured legate to take revenge for their comrades. Returning with a pacific air, they secretly took measures to carry it into execution; and, suddenly laying hands upon the unhappy and disarmed people, they cruelly butchered them, murdered children at their mothers' breasts, wives in the arms of their husbands, and hung up young infants at the doors of the houses. About 5,000 were killed; and all the houses were sacked. Such was the horrible enterprise counselled by a minister of the sanctuary*,

* Poggii. Hist. lib. 2. and Siennese Chronicle. In the latter the tragical event is distinctly related, where we discover the whole to have been done by the command of the cardinal. "And the cardinal said to Messer Giovanni . . . I command thee that thou and thy people descend to the place and do justice: Messer Giovanni said, Messer, I will go and will so do, that all the people of the place shall lay down their arms, and give themselves up guilty to you. No, said the cardinal, blood, blood, and justice: said Messer Giovanni, think of the consequences. The cardinal replied, I command you to do so." . . . Follow the said Chronicle at the narration of which the mind shudders, such events

who is compared by St. Antonine to Herod and Nero ; and such were the calamities which Italy suffered from the hands of these foreign bullies paid by herself. One of the leaders of these villains, John Auguto, gained by the Florentines, left the pope, and came over with the robbers adherent to him, to the service of the republic : Varano grew jealous of this, and, leaving the Florentines, went into the pay of the pope. His affairs, however, continued to decline : fresh cities rebelled against him every day ; his troops were discomfited various times ; and these misfortunes, instead of lessening his cruelty, only inflamed him the more with the lust of it. The Florentines irritated at the manifest injustice, paid no regard to the interdict, and obliged the ecclesiastics of every rank to re-open the churches, which had been shut up for seventeen months, and celebrate divine service * ; threatening those who disobeyed with severe punishment. In the following year, the pope died ; and Bartholomew of Perpignan, of the territory of Pisa, being elected

hardly being found in the deeds of Attila, of Genseric, and of Tamerlane. "During the slaughter, the cardinal cried aloud ' Entirely, entirely.' Some thousands of those who fled, betook themselves to the Cervia, demanding alms. Such are, in these times, the works of the prelates and clergy of the house of God !" Cesena, which at that time was inhabited by 40,000 persons, remained empty, nor could ever more recover. All the chronicles of that time agree in the narration of the execrable deed. That of Bologna adds, " Nero never committed such a cruelty, that almost the people would believe no longer either in pope or cardinals, because these were things to go out of credit." If Baluzio, commentator of the lives of the popes of Avignon had had such information, he would not have undertaken to defend it with so much ardour when he was created pope or antipope under the name of Clement VII. See Baluz., t. 1. p. 1084. The horrid slaughter is related by all the Italian cotemporary historians.

* Chronicle of Sienna.

under the name of Urban VI.*; peace was easily effected, as Urban harboured no animosity; and upon eight citizens being sent to him, it was immediately concluded. Florence, however, appeared destined to suffer from the cruel fatality, that peace abroad was the universal fore-runner of war at home.

* The Pisans made great festivals for fifteen days, on account of his election: his grandmother was of the family Scaccieri, that is, that of St. Ranieri, Protector of Pisa.—Cron. Pisanna, Rer. Ital. tom. 15.

CHAPTER VII.

REFLECTIONS UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF FLORENCE.—TYRANNICAL ACTS OF THE CAPTAINS OF THE GUELPHAN PARTY.—OPPOSITION MADE BY SILVESTER MEDICI.—ORIGIN OF THIS FAMILY.—INFLUENCE OF SILVESTER.—REBELLION OF THE CLOWNS (CIOMPI).—CHARACTER OF MICHAEL LANDO.—MAKES A REFORM IN THE GOVERNMENT.—NEW TUMULTS AND CONFUSIONS.—MICHAEL'S VALOUR AND MODERATION.—NEW REFORMS.

NOTHING sounds finer in the ear than the names of liberty and republic : nothing is more difficult to regulate than a government which, leaving its citizens in the possession of all the civil liberty which they are capable of enjoying, secures them at the same time from the disorders attendant upon anarchy. A machine of this description is very complicated, and therefore easily put out of order *. It is necessary that the various powers forming a republic should hold an equal balance ; but as men are more desirous of commanding than willing to obey, they easily depart from the limits assigned them, and consequently produce those shocks and collisions which give rise to popular tumults.

Nothing at first sight appeared wiser than the constitution of the Florentine republic ; the useful arts which formed her riches were the basis upon which she was founded : from these all the magistrates were selected who could promulgate no laws but such as were useful to commerce ;

* *Cunctas nationes, et urbes, populus aut primores, aut singuli regunt : delecta ex his et constituta forma laudari facilius quam evenire, vel si evenit haud diuturna esse potest.*—Tacit. Ann. lib. 4.

this, however, was not sufficient to keep the republic in tranquillity. The lust of dominion, of outvying each other, a seed too lamentably sown in the human heart, produced the most sanguinary commotions in Florence, and her government, at all times unstable, was continually wavering between aristocracy and democracy, and often degenerating into anarchy. Far from any equilibrium existing between the parties or magistrates who constituted the government, one for a long time had become the arbiter; viz., the magistracy of the Guelphan party, which by *admonishing*, or excluding whosoever they pleased from the offices, struck terror into all the Florentines who wished to have any share in the government. The institution alone of this magistracy, supposing even the individuals who composed it to be the most upright, was at once an injustice and an act of bad policy. The seeds of the two factions Guelph and Ghibelline were always maintained, and with all the endeavours made to extinguish the latter, they only gave it fresh vigour. Nothing is more adapted to maintain and strengthen a faction than persecution. Minds being irritated at injustice, imbibe only new vigour to protect them from injury, as well as zeal for gaining new adherents: a lesson which experience has so frequently given mankind, but given unfortunately in vain. But the Ghibellines were not the only persons persecuted by the Guelphan magistracy: that name was applied to all persons who displeased them, who were consequently persecuted or rendered by admonition incapable of serving the state. As the trials were so illegal in order to declare the citizens such, it is clear how often informations, innocent words, and equivocations malignantly interpreted, as it pleased the magistracy, served as pretexts for exclusion.

In order to place better before the eyes of the reader

the acts of iniquity committed by the captains, and form a perfect picture of them, we must necessarily connect the various events of past years. An outcry of indignation had been often raised in the city against their injustice, and therefore some wise and just magistrate had endeavoured to put a bridle upon their tyranny: thus by adding two new individuals to the four of the magistracy, and these taken from the people, they thought by diffusing it among many, to diminish their authority*. And, afterwards, when the remedy was found of little use, they attempted to increase the dose. Uguccone Ricci, one of the priors, nauseated with their extravagancies, and an enemy to Peter Albizzi, who was the dictator of that magistracy, seeing himself unable to abrogate the unjust law, proposed and obtained that the captains should be increased to the number of nine, two thirds of whom should be agreed in every condemnation; and, moreover, that twenty-four citizens, should be drawn for by lots from a poll composed of Guelphs, before whom the accused could exculpate himself; nor was he to be declared guilty except by twenty-two votes†. But the remedy was light, and the balsam converted into poison, since, however incorrupt the new additions were, the vanity of being the arbiters of the republic, made them adopt the sentiments of the magistracy. Masters of excluding their enemies, or whoever was indifferent towards them, from the most important employments, they had the art of making them fall upon their creatures, and thus ruled the republic. They employed two opposite measures of prevailing; either by destroying the political existence of the citizens by *admonishing* them,

* Buomins. Florentine History, book 3. Amm. book 12.

† Ammir, Florentine History, book 12.

or by associating them to their designs, if, on account of the person being too respectable, *the admonishing him* would have been dangerous.

We have already seen that the family of the Ricci had vigorously opposed their tyranny: this family being invited secretly by Peter Albizzi to enter into the league.

^{1378.} no longer offered any resistance to the despotism exercised by the captains, whose courage, therefore, having increased, they had the imprudence to propose a law that nothing should be deliberated upon either in favour of, or against, the captains, if it had not first been discussed in the assembly of the captains themselves, which put the seal upon their tyranny. The law being frequently proposed in the council of the priors, and rejected, some had the effrontery to exact from them that they should give the votes uncovered, and they had both the meanness to submit themselves to it, and the pusillanimity to pass the law. The city murmured greatly at this: many of the principal citizens assembled to deliberate upon the measures to be taken for reforming that government; and being accused by the captains of conspiracy, they repaired boldly to the council of the signiors, exposed their grievances, and obtained some slight redress. An authority was constituted to reform the government, but the only change of any note was the election of the ten, called the ten of liberty, which was to be their particular care, as well as the administration of justice; and they were to have a vote in the decision of war. Such an office, if we except the last point, possessed charges far too vague, and became incapable of bridling the captains, who, maintaining their influence, could also introduce corruption into this office, by drawing to their own party whoever they pleased, either by holding out expectations, or making use of threats. They

well knew how to use their arms at a proper season. Peter Pietribuoni, one of the priors, proposed a very just law, that no admonition of the captains should have effect unless approved by the signiors and colleagues of the palace. This law was not only not subjected to opinion, but hardly was the business terminated, when the captains, who well knew the little esteem in which the public held this man, caused him to be dragged as a Ghibelline and malefactor before their tribunal, where he was in danger of losing his head, and owed his escape only to the most abject supplications made to those despots, and considered himself happy in getting away from them, upon being for ever deprived of holding any office. If, too, they discovered any intrepid and eloquent defender of liberty, who made himself formidable to them, they

^{1378.} knew well how to throw into the mouth of this Cerberus the healing cake, and pacify him. A celebrated Florentine, Lapo of Castiglionchio, professor of laws, one of the most learned men of his age, and who was honoured by the friendship of Petrarch, distinguished himself as one of these in the years 1372-73. After having warmly declared against that magistracy, he suddenly grew silent, when John Magalotti, getting up after them, at the time when he was one of the priors, undaunted by the danger of Pietribuoni, proposed new laws which were to limit the authority of the captains: then it was that Lapo was suddenly heard with astonishment, who employed his eloquence in their defence, without blushing, not with the moderation which it appeared ought to have been dictated to him by the consideration of the trial that was to be made of him, but with the blind and daring violence of party. Magalotti possessed the favour of the people, and was listened to with applause, but not being supported by his compa-

nions, obtained not his purpose. Lapo, however, had obtained it, and was chosen, on account of his merit, one of *the learned of the Guelphan party for life*. They ventured not, however, to persecute Magalotti, knowing how greatly he enjoyed the esteem of the public*. Thus in order to maintain their authority, these men employed by times both premiums, punishments, and indifference; and, because there are no means which policy considers unjustifiable, they had also recourse to a singular expedient.

Catherine of Sienna, who was become celebrated for her sanctity, was living at this time. She was first sent to Avignon to the pontiff, to solicit him to return to his proper seat at Rome: coming to Florence, without having obtained her intent, the simplicity of the virgin was deceived by the captains of the party, who, in order to associate heaven with their iniquity, introduced the saint frequently into the magistracy, thinking her universally inspired, and made her publicly extol their method of admonishing as acceptable to heaven, and necessary to the tranquillity of the republic†. The populace are taken more easily by these means, than by truth and reason. The admonished soon became innumerable: to be subject to which punishment it was sufficient to proffer any equivocal word against that magistracy. They were feared and respected as sovereigns; the greatest citizens humbled themselves before them by the most servile acts; no one ventured to bear testimony against them, no creditor demand his own: the sufferance

* The virtuous zeal evinced by this citizen, was attested by his country, which, after his death, caused this single word, *libertas*, to be carved upon his sepulchre.

† Amm. Istor. Fior. lib. 13.—(Ammiratori Florentine History, book 13).

of the public made them continually more daring, and their authority became strengthened every day. Alessio Baldovinetti, and Laurence Dino were in risk of their lives, for having offered a petition against Benghi Buondelmonti, one of the captains, by whom they had been injured. The mayor not lending himself to such an act of injustice, they were condemned in money. The audacity of that tribunal was carried so far as to admonish John Dini, one of the eight of the war, one of the most respectable citizens of Florence, and who had so gloriously served his country in that office. The people were suffering and groaning, under grievances, and it might be foreseen that the thunderbolt was not far from bursting, since the patience of the people must have an end, who, in proportion as they have been oppressed, are wont to break out with greater violence.

The first courageous resistance made to this tyranny, originated with a family, which, continually acquiring greater popularity and riches, placed itself at the head of the republic, and finally arrived at the control of the government. The house of Medici has, like all the rich and powerful, been flattered as usual, or rather insulted, by officious genealogists, who are accustomed to pour out incense offensive to delicacy, which can only be enjoyed by the most vulgar organs*. Originally, from Mugello,

* The most learned will have them take their origin from a physician (Medico), having the medical cups as insignia of the art: tasteless flattery went so far as to convert these cups into apples of the gardens of Hesperides, deriving the origin of the family from Perseus.—Coppola. poem il Cosimo, Can. 1. ottava 76.

Cosmo è questi, a tuo padre, a te sì caro,
Di merto e di valor tra i più perfetti
Magistrato sovrano coi regi a paro
Reaser gli avi, onde medici fur detti,
Scesi dai Re d' Atene, indi passaro
Sull' Arno, e crebber sempre al ciel dilette

honourable and industrious merchants, they greatly extended the commerce of the republic, amassed vast riches, which they afterwards employed in the wants of their country, in succouring the needy, and in promoting arts and literature. This is the most brilliant title that can be given to the family. Whoever searches into antiquity for their merit, will find that they were rich and honourable, as far back as the twelfth century*. Silvester, of the house of Medici, who, about this time, began to be distinguished as director of the people, was the author of the dangerous sedition, which defeated the oligarchy of the captains of the party, but did immense mischief to the city. Honest in his intentions he foresaw not that it is more easy to excite, than to put an end to, popular seditions. Minds grown warm by animosity, and sored by oppression, cannot see the danger of the means they employ to revenge themselves. Silvester was made Gonfaloniere, with the universal applause of the people, who knew his virtues, and hoped by his aid to obtain relief from their present ills. The captains, who, from circumstances, had foreseen the intention, were disposed to admonish him as one not favourable to them, but ventured not to do so, knowing the favour he enjoyed among the people; and tried other means to exclude him, but in vain. Silvester took the reins of ma-

*E nel sangue inostrar quei pomi d' oro,
Che pria del gran Persèo l' insegna foro.*

The author, too, in prose, says the same in the dedication to Ferdinand II., and says, that he writes by order of this sovereign.

* This assertion is supported by a book written by one of the house of Medici, in 1438, where it is said, that two ages ago, a quarrel was settled by the friends between the Medici and the Gizi, about the patrimony of the church of St. Thomas in the old market. Silvana Razzi, in the Life of Silvester Medici, says, that manuscript book was presented to the Grand Duke Cosimo.

gistracy, whose authority being dreaded by the captains, they began of their own accord to speak of moderation and justice in admonishing, and some measures were taken, weak indeed for so great an evil, but which were accepted by Silvester, in order not to push matters to a dangerous excess. Among the rest, was one, that no citizen, proposed to be admonished, should be brought under consideration more than three times. Perhaps these little restrictions upon the authority of the captains, if at best they were observed, would have tended to prolong it; but, it was not long before, wishing to admonish two citizens, Giraldo Pajolo Galigajo, and Francis Martini, the proposal was not approved by the twenty-four, even when put three times to their consideration: the captains grew angry, caused another twenty-four to be elected, using every fraud in order that they might become their adherents, and even in vain, since even among these also, the third scrutiny did not condemn them. Bettino Ricasoli, a violent and rash man, got up, and crying out that the two persons proposed should have been admonished even in spite of God, as well as of man, ordered the palace to be shut, took the keys, exclaiming that no one should leave it, unless the two were first condemned. The consideration was renewed twenty-two times, until night coming on, they prevailed, from the weariness and pusillanimity of the twenty-four. Such violence being made known, excited the indignation of the public, and particularly of Silvester, who, joining with some of the principal citizens, sought the means of restraining such acts of insolence. They concerted a law by which the severe orders against the great were renewed, excluding them from the public employments, the authority of the captains was diminished, and all the admonished were rendered capable of holding their ancient privileges.

On the 18th of June they caused the college of the priors, and the council of the people, to assemble at the same time, in order that they might be enabled, without delay, to pass the law in both councils, fearing the difficulties that any postponement might give rise to. But the law being first proposed in the colleges, Silvester perceived in the doubtful words, in the confused countenances, in the embarrassments of the members, and afterwards in the broken sentences which came from them in their disputes, that they were labouring in vain*. Leaving the house, and going into the council of the people, with a countenance and gestures which betrayed the agitation of his mind, he explained, with eloquence, the wretched state into which the city was thrown, on account of the tyranny of the captains, the remedies that he proposed, and the difficulties the members found in the execution of them, terminating his discourse by telling them that, seeing no means of setting right the general wrongs, it was his intention to abandon the magistracy immediately, return to his own home, and attend as a private individual to his domestic affairs. Having said this he got up hastily to go away. He was, however, stopped, and encouraged to proceed in his enterprise, the greater part of the council at the same time murmuring loudly against the insolence of the great. The square was filled with people greedy of novelty. Benedict Alberti, one of the friends of the Gonfaloniere, coming forward to the windows of the palace to give a stability to the colleges in passing the proposed law, cried out, long live the people, and hinted that the same should be shouted out in the square. The report spread itself throughout the whole city, the shops were shut, and

* See Gino Capponi, upon the tumults of the Ciompi.

arms taken up, which determined the colleges to approve the law immediately. The captains of the party, although they were armed with their adherents, hearing the universal motion throughout the city, to which they felt themselves incapable of opposing resistance, remained quiet. If the movement had stopped here, reparation would have been obtained for the injustice without further tumult; but although the people, from their natural sloth, are lazy in moving themselves, they become violent enough, and incapable of restraint when once set in motion*. The city became full of suspected persons. On the following day, guards were dispersed through all the streets, and the shops were not opened. The trades met on the subsequent days, created their overseers, who repaired to the palace to take care that the law was passed in the general council; but either they delayed too long, or the people were too impatient; the agitation continued increasing to a degree, that fearing the consequences of this impatience, the council was assembled, and power given to the Gonfaloniere, priors, colleges, captains of party, ten of liberty, and eight of the guard, united with the comptrollers of the trades, to reform the government. Whilst they were deliberating, either from dread, or under the pretext that the party of the captains was preparing for hostilities, the populace in arms hastened to the house of Lapo of Castiglionchio, which, with others of his companions', was pillaged and set fire to. He had foreseen the tempest, and having deposited his property of most value the day before in the temple of the holy cross, he fled into the Casentine disguised as a friar. With the same fury they treated

* "*Insita hominibus natura propere sequi quæ piget inchoare.*"—
TACIT.

the houses of many of the principal signiors, notorious for their adherence to the Guelphan oligarchy, such as the Buondelmonti, Siminetti, Strozzi, Guadagni, Albighi, Pazzi, Covoni and others; they forced open the public prisons, and liberated the prisoners: the convents of the angels, and of the Holy Ghost, (Santo Spirito,) were sacked, where many citizens had concealed their most precious effects; and the house of the community would have been served the same but for the intrepidity and valour displayed by Peter Fronte, one of the priors, who furnished an example how popular movements may be bridled by vigour, firmness and courage, qualities which were not imitated by his companions. Getting on horse-back, and followed by a few armed men, he repelled, in great measure, the onset of the mob, both by words and actions, and caused three of the ringleaders to be arrested and hanged*. Night put an end to the tumult. In the following days the authority, composed of eighty-one individuals, published the reform, wherein, although provisions were made against the tribunal of the captains of the party, nevertheless, a colour of respect for it was visible from their determinations; a measure but little serviceable to present and future circumstances, since no better opportunity ever presented itself to abolish it entirely, to extinguish even the name of the faction of the Guelphs and Ghibellines, and moreover to re-establish immediately the admonished in their ancient privileges.

The historian must here form his opinion in the silence of passions: perhaps an act of this nature was at that time impossible in a city devoted to the Guelphan faction, and which considered a body necessary to watch

* Capponi, tumults of the *Ciompi*.

over its preservation. That iniquitous magistracy was left standing; its powers only were modified by declaring that henceforth any of the admonished might have recourse, in the space of three days, to the Gonfaloniere and priors, who, assembling their colleagues within three subsequent days, the ten of liberty and twenty-one consuls of the arts, drawn by lots, and having called the captains of the party, were to listen to the reasons of the accused, who could be brought under consideration, at most, only three times. They moreover pardoned the admonished, upon condition, however, that they were to hold no employment for three years. This delay was unjust and impolitic, since men exasperated by a long oppression, and excited thereby to tumult, cannot remain contented with dilatory satisfaction. Other provisions of less importance were made; Lapo of Castiglionchio was declared a rebel, and many were rendered incapable of holding employments.

The tumult being over, Florence remained in a calm, attended with suspicious appearances, such as usually precede a tempest; the usual festivals of St. John did not take place, nor were the shops generally opened; the city was filled with peasantry brought to it by private individuals for their own defence; and many of the streets were blocked up with bars. Silvester Medici alone, amidst these suspicious events, gained the greatest honours, although he had already laid down the magistracy at the end of June. Whenever he appeared in public he was received by the people with astonishing favour, and was looked upon as their liberator from tyranny. Such was the beginning of the popularity which continued to increase in that family. The new Gonfaloniere, Lewis Guicciardini, and the priors on the 1st. of July, contrary to the usual practice, did not

publicly take possession of their authority, nor was the ceremony accompanied with the ringing of bells, but was privately conducted in the palace. They gave themselves every care to re-establish tranquillity, and hearing that the discontent continued particularly on account of the restriction imposed upon the admonished, they effected a new modification of the law against them. It is strange to perceive the many difficulties which are met with in adopting measures the most evidently useful, and which are best adapted to do away with discontent; since although various persons were immediately re-appointed to their old employments, many were at the same time forbidden to hold them. The government too was wanting in precaution, by neglecting at so dangerous a period to call a sufficient number of troops to Florence to make its orders respected, which troop, as they were scattered in various places of the neighbourhood, would have been ready to co-operate in a few hours.

But if the middle orders of the people were thus sufficiently satisfied, the seeds of ferment still remained in the mob, which is always discontented in all governments, and who, having once tasted the fruits of sedition by plunder, were not willing to return to their accustomed tranquillity; the more so, as in the reformation of the magistracy, a general pardon had been declared for the thefts and other crimes committed in the last rebellion of June, provided that the articles stolen were restored in the month of July. The citizens, moreover, who were still excluded from the employments, tacitly insinuated to the mob, that, when the government acquired sufficient force, the culprits would be taken and hanged. This mob was composed of the humbler classes of workmen in the woollen and other manufactures, who, as usual, complained of being tyrannized over and badly

paid by the principal merchants, their labours even taxed by the magistrates belonging to the same trades; in short, the booty they had already tasted, the fear of losing it, the discontent arising from poverty, the greediness after novelty, and the facility of arriving at it, encouraged them to fresh tumult. Unfortunately this rude and blind animal, the mob, had already become acquainted with its own power from experience. We nevertheless discover that the principal foment of the sedition consisted in the bad disposition evinced by those who were still excluded from the employment, who were continually fanning the flame not yet extinguished, as we learn from the continual fresh petitions made upon this subject to the magistrates*. In these tumults the city remained immersed down to the 19th of July.

In the mean time various secret assemblies being held by the mob, in order to concert upon a method for changing the government, and restore it to their own hands, the priors got intelligence of it. On the 19th one of them was arrested, named Bugigatto, who was believed privy to the conspiracy. From him it was learnt that the danger was imminent; he confessed that many respectable citizens were partisans in the plot, and named Silvester as the head, who, upon being summoned by the magistracy, denied not having been invited by the mob, to make himself chief of the insurrection, but protested that he had refused it: he added, that, in fact, he now perceived he had erred in not disclosing it to the government, but that he had considered it a matter of little importance, and without any consequences attached to it, as a design merely emanating from foolish and ignorant people. This was, indeed, rather a weak

* Capponi Tumulti de' Ciompi.

excuse than a justification, and Silvester was in danger of being the first to suffer the penalty of being in the conspiracy, some of the nobles being of opinion he ought to be cut to pieces; but it was not difficult to foresee that as he was the idol of the people who continued in so great a ferment, his death would have been the signal for the most determined insurrection. Those precautions were taken which time permitted. The different places (terre) of the republic were written to, although somewhat late, to send to Florence whatever armed people they could collect, and an order was issued in the city for the protection of the government. Whilst Bugigatto*, however, was undergoing examination and torture, the persons who were continually going into the public palace to regulate the dial, got intelligence of it, and being probably on the side of the conspirators, made known to the common people that their designs were discovered. The latter took up arms with the greatest fury, and sounding the alarm bells of various churches, repaired at the dawn of the day of the 20th to the square, where not more than eighty-five persons, armed with lances in defence of the government, appeared; and who either panic-struck, or from treachery, remained continually in inaction. From the square the mob hastened to pillage and set fire to the house of the gonfaloniere Guicciardini, as well as those of the most odious citizens, nor did they spare the palace and residence belonging to the trade of wool, where they burnt all their papers and documents concerning it. Returning to the square, the people began to hurl arms against the palace, shouting that all who were arrested should be given up to

* Gino Capponi, Tumulti de' Ciompi.

them, and the Priors were obliged to yield to all their demands. There were only two gonfalonieri, that of the golden lion (*Leon d'oro*) led on by Giovenco Stufa, and that of the grey Miniver or Viory (*Vaio*) by John Cambi, with few followers, who came to the succour of the Priors: the others, either panic-struck, or desirous that the powerful citizens should be humbled more than what had been effected in the reformation, made no movement; nay, the two even, seeing they were not followed by the rest, soon abandoned the square. The mob had made themselves masters of the banner of the executioner of justice, after which the plebeians had been accustomed to run, in order to cause the public orders to be carried forcibly into execution against the powerful, the rebels, or those who possessed sufficient power to resist the executioners. With this standard the seditious led on the rabble to burn, pillage, and destroy the houses, thus considering themselves the executors of the orders of justice: and in order to prove that they were in possession of the supreme power, they did acts which belonged to that power alone, such as creating chevaliers, an act exercised very rarely even by the first magistrate. Of these, besides Silvester Medici, Thomas Strozzi, and the two Alberti, they created seventy-four. The citizens were obliged to submit to such ignominious distinction, and the great confusion which existed, may be inferred from observing that some of those whose houses had been burnt, were created chevaliers. It is reported that Silvester Medici himself, and Benedict Alberti, who were so acceptable to the people, being counselled by the priors to interpose their authority to appease them, rather excited them to further acts of rebellion. In the night-time they gave their attention to fortifying them-

selves in the palace, laying in provisions even for a considerable time ; measures entirely useless from the pusillanimity evinced by the priors.

The following day, the people assembling to the number of about 6,000, and seeing no force capable of resisting them, sent orders to all the trades to send forth their banners, in order to have the air of doing things legally : being obeyed, with the exception of the wool trade, they forcibly took possession of the palace of the mayor, in order to establish their residence in it, and sent extravagant demands to the priors, who saw themselves obliged to yield. The plebeians were aware that troops were approaching Florence, and intimated to the government to order them to draw back, and were obeyed, becoming more audacious the more they saw the fear increase in the magistrates. They finally sent a peremptory order to the gonfaloniere and priors, that they should leave the palace, not intending to be any longer governed by them. One of them, Guerriante Marignotti, had set a bad example by abandoning the post of honour in the greatest danger, and retiring to his own house, from which, probably, the mob took occasion, and increased in audacity, to make an outrageous intimation to the remainder. The magistracy remained uncertain what party to embrace, when Strozzi appeared and advised them to leave the palace immediately, otherwise their houses would be burnt, and themselves, probably, murdered. They resisted for some time, and Alamanno Acciajoli, and Niccolao Nero remained even after the departure of the rest ; but thinking every resistance useless, and considering they would only lose their own lives without saving the government, they at last departed.

Thus did the first magistrate meanly abandon the helm

of state, evincing an imbecile pusillanimity without giving the smallest sign either of precaution or of courage. The reins of government, entirely abandoned, fell into the hands of the rabble, called on that account, in derision, the government of the clowns. (*Ciampi.*) The banner of gonfaloniere was borne by one Michael Lando, a wool-comber or director of that trade, who entered the palace, and after him the common people. He held his shoes in his hands, and was barefooted. He had great ascendancy over the rabble, and was endowed with talents superior to his condition. He was proclaimed gonfaloniere by the people who declared their will to be governed by him. The crafty man accepted the offer ; and soon showed signs of a rigorous government, by ordering the gibbet to be erected in the square, and in order to give some satisfaction to the mob, knowing how odious Ser Nuto, once a sheriff (Bargello) elected by Lapo Castiglionchio was to them, he caused him to be hanged upon it ; he issued an order that whoever committed thefts, set fire to any property, or was guilty of other violences would incur the same punishment. He then began to act not as a mean mechanic, but as one of the first citizens accustomed to govern ; came down to the square in all the pomp of the gonfaloniere, caused himself to be proclaimed as such by the continued shouts of the people throughout the month of August, and gave power to himself, the eight of the war, the captains of the faction, and the baillies of the trades, to reform the government. We cannot do otherwise than highly praise his moderation, since the people were sovereign, considered him as their head, and if he had abused their favour, infinite ills would have accrued to the city. He might have caused himself to be declared prince or perpetual gonfaloniere ; and armed with the power of

the plebeians, superior to every other, by leaving the rein free to popular licentiousness, and permitting the plunder of the rich, he might have maintained his own power for a considerable time upon the ruin of the citizens. He contented himself with a legal authority, and therefore ordained the magistracy, according to which eight priors were created, who with the gonfaloniere formed the number of nine, determining that three were to be taken from the greater trades, three from the lesser, and three from the inferior people, who till then had no share in it: and in order to secure the established government, particularly in those turbulent times, he ordered a guard of 1,200 bowmen, three hundred of whom were to guard the palace, the remainder, the gates.

All the rest of the admonished were reinstated in their privileges. It was resolved upon that one moiety of public employments should belong to the individuals of the greater trades commonly called the idlers (*Sciope-rati*;) of the remainder, a moiety to the lesser trades, and the rest to the inferior people, or to two trades newly created; the office of gonfaloniere, however, was to belong exclusively to the greater trades. But the people not being content, it was found necessary to divide the employments into three parts, as well as the office of gonfaloniere alternately. Concessions made to the people sometimes only increase their insolence; nor were they appeased by them, as they thought the gonfaloniere had conceded little to them who were masters of all. They continued to assemble in the following days, always making strange demands upon the priors, which were followed by others still more indiscreet. The period of power had finished. Without consulting the government the mob created eight persons, two for

each quarter, and called them the eight of power. The signiors (Signori) were to change according to a determined time; the bell was rung for council: the common people rushed into the square, shouting out that they wished to know the names of those who were drawn by lot, not being disposed to approve of them, if they were not according to their own mind. The signiors (Signori), intimidated, yielded to every demand. The gonfaloniere alone grew violent. Nothing was done but drawing new names until the evening, and almost all were excluded by the plebeians of the middle rank, for whom it sufficed that one voice of disapprobation was raised in order that all the rest might be excluded with loud shouts. The whole day was uselessly consumed in these drawings. The day following the eight of power of the plebeians took their seat at Santa Maria Novella, whence two governments existed in Florence. They sent orders to the magistrate of the palace, that new priors should be immediately drawn for. They were drawn, and cancelled by the eight, who at last repaired to the palace, and addressing the signiors with the greatest indignity, making fresh and more indiscreet demands, the gonfaloniere encouraged his companions not to suffer such insolence; and causing all the armed people they could collect to assemble in the night, and giving them orders what to do, the alarm bell was rung in the morning, at the sound of which the trades appeared under their banners. An affray had already taken place in the new market, between the troops of the government, and the plebeians, to the disadvantage of the latter. In the mean while, two of the popular power were in the palace, speaking to the nobles (signori) with their accustomed insolence. The gonfaloniere, who had armed himself, unable longer to suffer it, ordered them to withdraw,

which they refusing to do, he drew his sword, drove them with blows down the stair, and caused them afterwards to be arrested: when getting on horseback, and causing the banner of justice to be drawn out, and accompanied by the trades, he scoured the city boldly without meeting with resistance, shouting *Liberty for ever, (viva la libertà) and death to those who wish to give the city to a tyrant*. He had either known, or had caused it artfully to be spread through the city, that the rebels had been in treaty for giving it up to the Duke of Ferrara, or some other prince. This report collected many to his standard, whence returning to the square, and finding that the rabble had occupied many of the principal streets, he was the first to spur his horse on against them, and mixing in the affray dexterously dispersed them. This victory restored calm to the city: the disorders, and the evils of which would have been continually increasing, had the rabble remained masters of the government.

Michael Lando, both by his prudence and personal valour, evinced a virtue not found in persons of the highest rank, who had meanly abandoned the palace without fighting. His period of office having expired, he was accompanied home with great honours by an immense multitude: the maidens of the palace carried a target before him with the arms of the people, a lance, and a courser adorned with magnificent trappings, grateful testimonies of his valour*. The public, however, much as they admired virtue even in the humble condition of Michael Lando, could not suffer that the magistracy of the nobles should be stained by others who had been

* All historians confess that the republic, in these difficult circumstances, was much indebted to Michael Lando. Bruni asserts that Divine Providence sent him in those times to repair the immense disorders. —Hist. Fior. lib. 9.

drawn by lots, and who, with a profession as mean as his, were without his virtues. Two from the lowest dregs of the populace, were cashiered by the voice of the people; one was called Baroccio Gonfaloniere, the other Tira or Tria, leaving a third called Benincasa. It was determined upon that the lowest class of all could not enjoy office. Two new companies of trades had been created by the people, which were registered amongst the lesser trades. The employments were distributed in a manner that the greater number should belong to the lesser trades, and the office of gonfaloniere to be alternately exercised by the greater and lesser: two councils were created; one called of the mayoralty of the commonalty, the other of the captain of the people, in which matters, deliberated amongst the priors, should be discussed, and when passed through the two councils, should have the force of a law. Many citizens were banished, who were registered in the lists of the great, deprived of the right of holding employments*. Thus terminated the dangerous revolution brought about by the Florentine mob, which although bridled, nevertheless curbed the oligarchy of the captain of faction, and the excessive power of the nobles.

* For an account of all these events see Gino Capponi, *Tumulto de' Ciompi*, Macchiavelli Istor. Fior. lib. 3. Cron. Sans. Cron. Pisana. Ammira. Istor. lib. 41. Buoninsegni. Istor. Fior. lib. 4. (Macchiavel's Florentine History, Book 3. Siennese Chronicle, Pisan Chronicle, Ammiratori's History, Book 41. Buoninsegni's Florentine History, book 4.)

CHAPTER VIII.

IRREGULARITY OF CRIMINAL TRIALS.—FOUR CONSPIRACIES DISCOVERED IN FLORENCE.—AFFAIRS OF THE PAPAL COURT.—THE CARDINAL OF GENEVA CREATED ANTIPOPE.—ARRIVAL IN TUSCANY OF CHARLES CALLED THE PEACEABLE.—SACKING OF AREZZO.—TRAGIC END OF QUEEN JANE OF NAPLES.—FRESH DISTURBANCES IN FLORENCE.—CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.—AFFAIRS OF NAPLES.—THE FLORENTINES PURCHASE AREZZO.—CHANGE IN SIENNA.

ALTHOUGH the tyranny exercised by the captains of the faction was the cause of the disastrous tumult which arose in Florence, if we more closely examine the Florentine constitution, as well as those of the other provinces of Italy, the seeds of the public discontent will be found to have existed in the irregularity with which the criminal trials were conducted. These trials, and consequently life, honour and property, depended upon the will of one captain or mayor, who did acts, not in the face of the public, but within the walls of his own palace, and by means of his own agents, tortured criminals, at his option, and pronounced sentences which he caused to be carried into immediate execution. Those citizens who held the principal powers in their hands, possessed also the greatest influence over the will, and therefore over the determinations, of these judges, who easily absolved the rich, the powerful and the adherents to the members of the government, whilst they condemned those of the contrary faction. The palladium of the liberty of a republic consists in the public trials by jury,

who must be drawn by lots, and in the equal administration of the laws to all, so that no person may be found more powerful than the laws which are to control him. In the Florentine republic, as well as in others of Italy, in lieu of the absolute empire, which the laws ought to have held, a party reigned which held the government exclusively in their own hands. The ministers of justice depended in secret upon that party, which, upon being discarded, was succeeded by another, having the same influence over the same ministers, who were to condemn the very persons they had before pardoned. The populace, who are always the most turbulent, and who regard with an eye of envy the rich and powerful, are more tranquil and content when they see the law in equal measure punish both the elevated and humble citizen of the state: but in order that they be persuaded of this, it becomes necessary that trials should be public.

The sedition had been extinguished, but a secret ferment remained in all ranks. The nobility had been humbled, the populace had not obtained what they wished, and the discontented, although of a different party, easily united against the government: the seeds of conspiracy therefore remained in the city, and no less than four followed each other in a short time. The first was designed at the end of this same turbulent year, probably by the Guelphan party: above seventy citizens of the first rank were interested in it, some few of whom were beheaded, such as Pagnozzo Tornaquinci, Silvester, S. Giorgio, and a few others who were taken with arms in hand, without the city, and many were banished*. A veil was drawn over the remainder. Of the second, which was discovered in lent, Pagno Strozzi, prior of

* Buonin's History of Florence, Book 4.—Amm., Book 14.

St. Lawrence, and Guerriante Marignotti were the ringleaders; this man was the same Marignotti who, in the rebellion, being one of the priors, had been the first so cowardly to desert the palace. These carried with them many others of the discontented. The order of the conspiracy was, to give a false alarm of fire on the Good Friday, when the people were assembled at prayers, by ringing the bells, upon which signal the conspirators were to massacre the citizens who were pointed out to them, and assembled in the churches, and to change the government. This was the laudable enterprise, for which an ecclesiastic, the prior of St. Lawrence had chosen the Good Friday, and was to have been the first to give the signal with the bells of St. Lawrence. Upon the conspiracy being discovered, the ringleaders saved
 1379. themselves either by flight, or by the connivance of the magistrates, and seven of the less guilty citizens were beheaded. The third conspiracy followed soon after, of which a secular was ringleader, a man who apparently led a pious and holy life. Both he, and a company of similar devotees, assembled in the convent of Ognissanti, at a friar's, and were accustomed to fast, to sleep on the ground, and to clothe themselves in the most humble attire. The chief, called Giannozzo Sacchetti*, had already deceived many under the hypocritical mask of devotion, had cheated his creditors when a prisoner in the jails, (*stinche*,) and had taken jewels from a private individual, the value of which served him to accomplish his designs. Charles, son of the Duke of Durazzo, a descendant of Charles II., King of Naples, was then in Lombardy. He had been sent with a body of troops, by Louis King of Hungary, against the Vene-

* He was brother of Franco, well known for his tales.

tians, and had been incited to make the conquest of the kingdom of Naples, as that king had never laid aside his hatred towards the queen Jane. Around Charles, as an armed prince in Italy, who gave umbrage to every Italian power, all the outlaws assembled, to whom he listened from political views. Amongst them were many Florentines, together with Lapo of Castiglionchio, and Benedict Peruzzi. Sacchetti, repairing hither, held secret conferences, particularly with the two latter, in which they gave him to understand or believe that Charles would favour the change of government in Florence, of which they gave him, for the satisfaction of the discontented, credential letters, probably forged, as the seals were counterfeited by Peruzzi, a very clever engraver on stone. With these hopes they sent him back to Florence, to endeavour to excite the city to new enterprises. The Florentine ambassadors who were with Charles, had warned the republic of the secret practices carried on by Lapo and Peruzzi with Giannozzo: whence the latter, upon returning to Florence, was arrested at Marignolle, with Boniface: Peruzzi confessed his crime, and was beheaded: many other citizens who were either guilty or suspected, were fined in two thousand florins of gold, and amongst the rest Peruzzi*.

At events like these, fears and inquietudes greatly increased in the city, as well as at the news brought to Florence from many parts, that the Florentines, who were favoured by Charles, and were at his court, were holding secret treaties with the citizens, in order to effect a change in the state. The Florentine ambassadors themselves, being returned, although they brought with them the most ample protestations of friendship from

* Ammir. History, lib. 14. Macchiav. lib. 3. Buonins. lib. 4.

Charles, nevertheless excited new suspicions, from their not being agreed amongst themselves. Donato Barbadori was accused by his colleague, Thomas Strozzi, with having frequently entertained, and played at the court of Charles, with the outlaws, and having given them a supper, without the attendance of his colleagues. Barbadori replied that he was not forbidden in his commission to treat the outlaws ; that, as he had gained a considerable sum from them, he had been requested to offer them a supper, and had not invited his colleagues because the former did not like it. Although he was not proceeded against, he remained always a suspected person in the mind of the public. The intimations which the Florentine government was continually receiving, were general at the beginning, and therefore only excited diffidence, without enabling it to act upon any foundation : finally, more particular information was received from the Count Anthony Alberti, wherein it was mentioned that a captain of Charles had joined the outlaws ; that various banners and flags, with the arms of Florence had been worked at Bologna, to serve the conspirators, with other details ; and one of the conspirators, Bruno of Johns, was mentioned, who, upon being arrested revealed the whole order of the treaty, the indicated banner was found, and he gave up many of his accomplices, who were of the first class of citizens. Many of them were kept in custody, amongst the rest Peter Albizzi, one of the principal authors of the captains of the faction, whose will

* Historians tell us that in the zenith of his power, at a banquet given by him, a vessel of silver was sent to him full of confectionary, amongst which was a nail placed in it either purposely or accidentally : but the Florentine wit interpreted it as being sent to him to point out to him that he ought to nail the wheel of fortune, which being arrived at the highest pinnacle for him, must soon decline.

had for so long a time given laws to the city ; it excited, therefore, no wonder that the loss of power had urged him on to the conspiracy. The government caused the trades to be armed, and the square to be guarded with a strong force. Either the necessary proofs were really not at hand, or the power and riches of the citizens caused a veil to be thrown over the eyes of those who undertook their process, the criminal courts declared that their crime was not sufficiently manifest ; but the people, who had not taken up arms, and by whom they were condemned before the sentence had been pronounced, accused the ministers of justice with partiality, and threatened to rebel.

It is evident that these irregularities would not have taken place, had the trials been held in public. The government then took a prudent course, namely, that of electing a number of citizens from the trades, from the magistracy of the faction, from that of the merchants, from the ten of liberty, from the twelve, and the gonfalonieri of companies, who were to consult upon the crimes of which prisoners were accused as well as upon the punishment to be awarded to the guilty. After mature examination, these persons counselled the magistrates to cause justice to be carried into execution, and this was a proof of their being considered guilty. It would have appeared that no doubt ought to have remained after their decision, nevertheless the executioners still refused, and the dispute was continued for a considerable time, between the latter and the people, until Benedict Alberti, one of the principal of the ruling party, having intimated to the priors, that if the guilty were not punished, the people would take vengeance with fire and sword, free course was left to justice, or rather to violence. Philip Strozzi, John Anselmi, and various others,

lost their heads: the people, however, not seeing the punishment extended to the rest, and particularly to Peter Albizzi, who was marked by the universal hatred, were upon the point of massacring his relatives, and setting fire to his houses, (since this was their strange and barbarous method they pursued to obtain their ends) when Peter, who till now had denied his guilt, and upon whose assertion, the captain refused to put him to death, is said to have confessed his crimes. Whether the same were real, or that he wished to sacrifice himself, however innocent, in order to save his relations from the fury of the people*, he saw that by obstinacy he would only destroy them without saving himself. Intrepid in the face of death, he endeavoured to inspire his companions with the same sentiments, by shewing them that an honourable and courageous end would make them immortal in the memory of posterity. Before the revolution of the clowns (*ciompi*), he had directed the government as he pleased by his genius, riches, and extensive connexion. With them were beheaded Jacob Sacchetti, Cipriano Mangiani, Bartholomew Simminetti, and Donato Barbadori, the same who, with so much courage, in Avignon, had replied in the public consistory to the interdicts issued against the Florentines, and maintained, with so much eloquence, the rights and honour of his country. He failed not in reminding the public of the services he had rendered his native land, in

* A similar resolution was taken in the revolution of England by the celebrated Earl of Strafford, to whom the king, being able and willing to grant a pardon, and the populace making a furious tumult, he caused him to be told that he left the sentence for execution. The weak Charles consented; but the earl, who had no good faith in the request, exclaimed at the news of the resolution of Charles, *maledictus homo, qui confidit in homine*.—Hume, History, &c.

protesting his innocence, and that he was sacrificed to the blind fury of the people*. It was reported that not a few of these were innocent; that the malignant
 1380. disposition evinced by the ringleaders of the popular faction alone brought them to the scaffold†. These conspiracies being discovered and punished, the government became the more strengthened, and remained, at least in great measure, in the hands of the lower orders. Many of the most conspicuous families, in order either not to be employed with them, or not to obey them, had retired to the country, and were obliged only by a law to return to the city.

During these tragic events, Italy was agitated by secular and ecclesiastical dissensions. The pontiff, Urban VI., endowed with Christian and religious virtues, more than with prudence and politics, had indisposed the minds of many cardinals, particularly French, who were accustomed to lead a soft and sybaritic life in Avignon, amidst the delights of Provence. Urban preached nothing but reformation, not with that soft tenderness adapted to persuade and captivate all hearts,

* Siennese Chronicle.—Buonin. History of Florence. Fior. lib. 4. Amm. l. 14.

† This doubt will always take place when trials are not public. In the description of these events, we read the irregularity of trials. Confession was necessary to condemn a culprit: it is very singular to believe that the culprit would confess the crime of himself: torture, however, was employed. This the captain caused to be applied at his own discretion, and here are the proofs of it: having declared that the principal persons accused did not appear to him guilty, and not choosing therefore to condemn them, upon the people in tumult demanding their death, Ammirato relates, that then only the captain caused the rope to be given to the culprits in the night, and that some of them confessed every thing. It was therefore in his power to torture, to pardon and to condemn whoever he pleased.

but with that rigid and lofty tone of threat, intimating to them that he chose to fix his seat in Rome. The severe language and harsh manners made use of by the reformer, created a great party against him, which was favoured by the King of France, Charles V., who unwillingly saw a sovereignty so important, together with the riches attendant upon it, lost to his kingdom. Even the Queen Jane, whom the pontiff threatened to shut up in the monastery of the Holy Clara, (*Santa Chiara*), united against him; the ⁴cardinals, his enemies, under various pretexts of illegitimate election*, having retired to Anagni, elected an antipope, who was probably the most unworthy subject of the sacred college, namely, the Cardinal of Geneva, author of the horrible massacre of the Cesenans, already mentioned. An ugly figure served only to cover a mind conformable therewith: squinting with one eye, and lame on one foot, he verified at once the vulgar proverb, and the verses of the spirited Martial†. Such was the man whom faction considered the most worthy of being elected to the pontifical throne.

Europe was now divided into two parties almost equal, and the contest lasted for many years between the two rival seats of Rome and Avignon; when Urban, seeing the storm coming on, so dangerous to himself and to religion, began to seek new means of resistance. He called to him Charles of the Peace, or the Peaceable, who had been already excited by Louis King of Hungary to invade the kingdom of Naples, with the promise of

* They said they had not been free in the election, since the Roman people armed around the conclave were shouting: *Death, or an Italian Pope.*

† Chron. Est. Rer. Ital. 9. tom. 15.

investiture. Charles refused not the invitation, and marched. He had hitherto evinced but little benevolence towards the Florentines. The outlaws found not only toleration, but even protection from him: his ambassadors coming to Florence, had in vain demanded money from the signiory: the rich presents sent to him, together with ambassadors, had been disdainfully refused; whence Charles approaching Tuscany with his troops, in order to pass into the kingdom of Naples, the Florentines took every care to guard their states by collecting many troops under Auguto. The latter, after having repulsed various bands of ruffians, sent by the outlaws against the Florentine territory, began to watch over the movements of Charles, who, breaking up from Lombardy, and passing by Bologna and Rimini, was about to continue his road in that direction, when the Florentine outlaws and the factions of various cities of Tuscany made him change his route. Called by the Bostoli and the Alberti, he repaired to Arezzo, who having expelled Azzo Ubertini and his companions, governed the city: they had soon, however, reason to repent of having done so, particularly the Bostoli, whose heads were taken off by the vicegerent of Charles for a conspiracy either supposed or real, by which they aimed at giving the city over to the Florentines*. He took possession of the town and fortress as sovereign; drew from it all the gold he could, demanded contributions from the Siennese, and received 2,000 florins. The exiled Florentines now persuaded him to carry his arms against Florence, and he marched by the side of the Siennese: but not finding favour and correspondent exertions, he returned to Arezzo. Here

* Siennese Chronicle, Rer. Ital. tom. 15.

the Florentine ambassadors came to meet him; and under his eyes one of them, John of Mone, was assassinated by three outlaws, Tommasino of Panzano, Louis Beccanagi, and Bartholomew of Ghirardaccio, without either Charles or the Aretine government demanding either the reason of it, or punishment for so atrocious a crime. The republic after having offered a great reward for the assassins, had recourse to the paltry revenge of razing to the ground the houses of the father and of the uncle of the two former, and confiscating their property*. Fresh ambassadors were sent, by whose means the Florentines agreed with Charles, paying them 40,000 ducats, and promising to furnish no aid to queen Jane, with other mutual obligations.

Charles now prosecuted his journey towards Rome and Naples, and the unfortunate Aretines were exposed to the most dreadful devastation of their country from his troops. Caracciolo was the vicerent of Charles in Arezzo: he had either exercised his command too cruelly, or had made himself odious to the ruling faction; the Aretines, therefore, suddenly taking up arms obliged him to take shelter with a small force in the fortress, where he called the Count Alberic of Barbiano to his succour, who commanded a body of plundering marauders. This body being received in the castle, Caracciolo fell upon the Aretines upon a sudden with his infamous band, and committed the greatest excesses, sparing neither sex, age, churches, nor monasteries. Guelphs or Ghibellines, all were enemies, if they possessed riches, or were women even of a pretty countenance: a horror, pathetically de-

* Siennese Chronicle, loc. cit. Ammiratori, Florentine History, lib. 14. Leonard. Comm. Urb.

scribed in obscure and barbarous verses by an Aretine poet, who was spectator thereof*. Another captain of Charles, Villanuccio† having arrived too with his people equally greedy of booty, despoiled the miserable city of what was left. Those robbers, it being then November, wished to pass the winter there, whereby the miserable inhabitants, without food, clothing, or shelter, were dispersed throughout the country.

Charles continued journeying towards Naples; and easily made the conquest of a kingdom which always received the last comer with favour, and overturned Jane from her throne, whose latter adventures and sorrowful end we shall soon have to relate. After the death of King Louis, various husbands offered themselves to her, amongst the rest, a son of the same King of France: desirous of governing of herself, she chose the handsomest and less powerful, James, the son of the King of Majorca, upon the condition that he would assume the title, not of King, but only of Duke of Calabria. The youth consented; but afterwards discontented with the mise-

* Ser. Gorello Aretino. Rer. Ital. Scrip., tom. 15.

Vidi commetter infiniti eccessi
Roberie, omicidii ed adulteri,
Incesti, stupri e sacrilegi spessi.
Degli onorati antichi monasteri
Vidi cacciar tutte l' oneste Donne,
E tutti i frati leigh bianche et neri:
Vidi fuggire con stracciate gonne
Vedove, maritate, giovanette
O con vergogna assai dentro camponne.

The Pisan Chronicle, loc. cit., recounts the fact a little differently, and finishes, "some citizens killed their wives, that they might not be taken or dishonoured."

† Thus Leonardo, the Aretine, calls him, but by Bonin., loc. cit., he is called Feratach.

able figure he appeared to make, he departed and betook himself to the war in Spain, where, being taken prisoner, and afterwards redeemed by his wife living always abject and humble, he soon died.

Jane contracted her fourth matrimony with a valorous prince, Otho of Brunswick, who, nevertheless, was obliged to content himself too with not assuming the title of royalty. But in spite of this advantageous matrimony, her ruin was approaching. She had been protected and elevated by the favour of one pontiff; the hatred of another contributed to her ruin. Urban VI., Jane having fomented the schism, and protected the antipope, thundered out his excommunication against her, and, in order to strengthen the spiritual arms, excited temporal ones against her, by inviting, as we have seen, the royal family of Hungary to occupy the kingdom; and Charles, accepting the invitation, had already advanced into the kingdom of Naples. Although he had before him a rival more powerful than himself, the husband of Jane, nevertheless, favoured by the people, at all times lovers of novelty, and whom the pontifical interdictions had indisposed against their own sovereigns, he met with little resistance. The gates of Naples were opened to him, of which he took possession, making Jane and her husband prisoners, who, abandoned by the greater part of his followers, made a desperate attack upon the superior force of Charles, and was wounded and taken. Jane being without heirs to the throne, had, since the year 1380, adopted as son, and declared her heir, Lewis of Angiers, brother of Charles V., King of France, who hearing of such great events in the kingdom, marched, with a powerful army, to the succour of his adopted mother, and to take possession of so fine a country. This movement redoubled the panic in the Florentines,

since all the passages of foreign troops, either through Tuscany, or near their states, either excited internal or external commotions, or squeezed money from them. One of the principal followers of Lewis was the Lord of Couci *, who, paying no regard either to the arms or entreaties of the Florentines, passed through Tuscany, and was invited to Arezzo, by the exiles from that city; and arriving there with the aid of the traitors, he scaled the walls by night, and broke through the gate of St. Clements, when the French troops entering, that miserable city suffered a fresh pillage, and Caracciolo retired with the people of Charles into the fortress †.

Whilst the Duke of Angiers was entering the kingdom, and a great part of the barons were making dispositions by their accustomed instability to favour him, the party of the queen prisoner was taking new courage. Charles thought it too dangerous to suffer her to live: at the beginning of her imprisonment, indeed, he had treated her with humanity, hoping to induce her to yield Provence to him; consequently, when the tardy succour of the Provençal galleys arrived at Naples, Charles desired her to assure the officers of the squadron she was treated by him as a mother, whereby considering him as her son, she was to make the cession of Provence to him in their

* He is called by historians the Signore of Conciaco.

† Siennese Chron. Rer. Ital. tom. 15.—Leonardi Aretini Com. The same author, when a child, was made prisoner; he relates, that being conducted to Quarata, he was shut up in a room, wherein the portrait of Petrarch was; and, that, upon contemplating that image, he felt himself warmly stimulated to study. The passion for letters was already kindled in that child, whilst in the doleful situation of his country, as he himself confesses, "*ea nocte acerbissima quidem omnium quas unquam meminerim*," separated from his father, who had been led prisoner to Pietramala, he could employ himself in those thoughts.

presence. She feigned indeed to consent to it; but when the officers came before her, she painted to them with the greatest energy full of a magnanimous resolution, the hatred she deservedly bore the usurper, beseeched her subjects of Provence to obey only the Duke of Angers, and dismissed them with a modest grief, telling them to give themselves no further trouble on her account, but to bury her. The irritated Charles, shutting her up in a close prison, shortly afterwards caused her to be put to death, either by poison or the rope*. Such was the end of a princess, who, in the midst of the excesses to which her violent passions induced her, wanted neither merit or talents. Her incautious youth, after the death of her grandfather, had been seduced by wicked counsellors, and driven on to crime; amidst a tumultuous and inconstant people, who considered her guilty, she knew, nevertheless how to make herself beloved, and at her departure excited the compassion of, and tears from, her subjects. Her soul, however, was composed of fire: amiable, of elegant manners, and a queen, every pleasing look became a seduction; and, if it is not a fable, she disdained not to listen in this respect to propositions from any person, which were little respectful, and even indecent†. Her life furnishes us with a new confirmation of the otherwise controverse maxim pronounced by the

* In the Siennese Chronicle it is said she was strangled with a veil.

† It is said that a foolish Florentine ambassador, hearing that the queen was not cruel towards fine men, and thinking himself such, begged her to retire with him into a more secret place, under the pretext of having great affairs to communicate to her: and the ambassador being pleased with this favour, made an indecent proposition to her: she, without proving angry, asked him if this was a commission of his republic.—Pogg. Facet.

great Roman politician ; *that a woman who has lost her modesty is capable of any thing**.

In the midst of these great events, the Florentine republic was almost internally tranquil. In the past seditions, the common people had remained victors, who, although afterwards repressed by Michael Lando, and succeeding magistrates, had, nevertheless, regained many privileges ; and the remembrance of having subdued the nobility, and obliged the magistrates to make them obeyed, rendered them still more lofty, and ready for mutiny. The plebeians always stand in need of a leader to guide them, and for the most part cannot find such a one in their own rank ; but amongst the first citizens there are never wanting persons sufficiently greedy of power or of novelty, to put themselves at their head. Many of the most distinguished had done so in the late seditions ; and some of them, such as Silvester Medici, with the laudable intention only of restraining the tyranny of the great. When the tumults were over, those who had directed the plebeians remained as it were princes of the city, the favourites of that body, and possessed the power, if they had the wish, of abusing that favour. Amongst these heads were George Scali, Thomas Strozzi, and Benedict Alberti. Of Silvester Medici, we say nothing ; too just to abuse the power, or too wise not to know the instability of the common people, he had retired into private obscurity. The three former had cer-

* *Neque fœmina amissa pudicitia alia abnuerit.* Tacit. Ann. lib. 4.—The maxim has been impugned by the moderns with many examples. Observe that it may have been true with the ancient Romans, when it was esteemed so great a crime to break the conjugal faith ; and false with light and gallant nations, who generally consider it not of much consequence.

tainly abused it: Scali and Strozzi were the most unjust and ferocious; Alberti, far more moderate, hated their tyrannical manners: many depraved men surrounded them, persons who, having no merits of their own to distinguish themselves, approach places and persons where the power exists of making themselves feared, and with their calumnies and informations had ruined various citizens: which is easily done where justice is not regularly administered. One of them, Jacob Schiattesi, called by surname Scatizza, calumniated John Cambi, an honest and most correct man, with keeping secretly armed people in his house in order to overthrow the government. The accusation appeared not only strange, but, opprobrious to the whole country: this man, therefore, being arrested, and convicted of falsehood, not only confessed his present crime, but many other calumnies and frauds he had practised, from which his cold and meditated iniquity was proved, since it tended to ruin any citizen who, by increasing in reputation, could give umbrage to his protectors, or to defame even those magistrates who were not to their perfect satisfaction. It appeared that this man, by the penalty inflicted by the tallion law, should have been condemned to death, and so thought the captain; but Strozzi and Scali opposed it, and the captain refusing to give him up, they obtained an order, more by threats than by entreaties, from the nobles, that Scatizza should be set at liberty; and dreading the opposition of the captain, they forcibly set him free by going with an armed force to the palace*. The captain, irritated at this inquiry, resigned the baton

* Every now and then new facts present themselves, which prove the principal vices of the government, in the defect in criminal trials, and the violation of justice. If they dared to do it so openly, what may not have happened in secret?

into the hands of the nobles, refusing to administer justice any longer.

This violence scandalized the city, and the murmurs which were made at it encouraged the government to revenge. Fearing, therefore, the popular influence of Alberti, they took every care to join him; nor was this difficult, as long since he had condemned the cruel and unjust measures taken by his companions. The captain was persuaded to assume the office again, and calling an armed force into the square, Scali was arrested, and twenty hours afterwards beheaded. Thomas Strozzi fled into Lombardy, and was the founder of the family Strozzi of Mantua. Various of the spies and followers of these men were barbarously put to death by the fury of the people*, without the form even of a process; whereby the humbled party got hopes of again changing the government of the state. And, already, the principal families, profiting of the favourable moment with the name of the Guelphan party, so dear to the city and to the ecclesiastics, assembled, and demanded with loud shouts that the government should be reformed. The accustomed power was appointed, by which the two lesser companies being abolished, which had been created by the violence of the *Ciampi*, they were again reduced to the usual number of twenty-one. As these two were filled with the lowest rabble, they freed the government from the disgrace of seeing frequently at its head the dross of the people*, and the greater part of the exiled were recalled.

This change was not effected without tumult. It rarely happens in political disputes, that the victorious party abuses not the victory: the nobles of the people

* Buonin., Ist. Fior. lib. 4. Sozom. Spec. Hist. Rer. Ital. tom. 16.

having regained the power, caused the weight of it to be felt by the conquered party by various acts of injustice—one example of which will suffice. Michael Lando, who, although one of the heads of the first rebellion of the Ciompi, had afterwards courageously fought and conquered them in the most dangerous moment, was sent into exile without any manifest cause: many other similar acts made the Ciompi rise again four separate times; but they were always overpowered, either by stratagem, or by force: until, finally, external fears, famine, a short but violent contagion, contributed to put an end to intestine discords.

1393. The Duke of Anjiers, having now penetrated into the heart of the kingdom of Naples, at once excited both the fear and the anger of Charles, which grew so warm that he sent the glove of challenge to the duke, to decide their differences by private combat. The brave duke gladly accepted the invitation, hoping, by a few blows, to put an end to a war which he foresaw would be long and difficult. Charles began to repent of his youthful fire; his prisoner, the Duke of Brunswick, let him see, that, by temporizing, he would beat the enemies' army, deficient in every thing, and attacked with a contagious disease. He was persuaded of this, and chose rather to bear the stigma of coward than expose to dangerous hazard what he was almost certain to obtain by patience. Both the rivals were attacked by the contagion, which, if it was regarded by those superstitious people as a judgment of God, such as duelling was considered, it was in favour of Charles, as he survived his rival, who died in a few days. The French army was soon dispersed. The Florentines, as usually happens to little powers in their contest with great ones, suffered on both sides; they had liberated themselves by their

gold from the persecutions of Charles ; but, under the pretext that Auguto, their general, had gone to his succour, their merchandise in France was confiscated, nor
 1384. was their having punished that captain by dismissing him the service considered a sufficient apology. They were now in great trouble concerning the affairs of Arezzo ; had given the command of the troops to John Obizzi, who soon encamped near it. The French, commanded by Monsieur de Couci, occupied the city, and the Neapolitans the fortress : the former, hearing of the death of the Duke of Anjiers, and considering the present a proper moment for him to retire, entered into a treaty of sale with the Florentines, who agreed to it for the sum of 50,000 florins in gold ; the Siennese, to whom it was offered, not having ventured to purchase it for 25,000 from dread of the Florentines *. Disbursements were made also to Caracciolo, who occupied the fortress, for the pay due to the soldiers ; and thus this double tempest of Charles and Lewis which had threatened Florence, was dissipated. Arezzo, together with all the castles she possessed, came under the dominion of the Florentines. That unhappy city and her territory were now in the greatest desolation ; and she considered it fortunate in that moment to pass under the dominion of a rich republic, which could relieve her indigence : a compact, therefore, was entered into by which she freely and willingly confirmed what had been established between Couci, Caracciolo, and the republic.

Greatly as the acquisition, however, of this part of Tuscany augmented the power and contributed to the content of the Florentines, by so much it spread discon-

* Siennese Chron. Rer. Ital. scr. t. 15. Amm. History, lib. 14. Leonard. Aret. Comment.

tent in the Siennese towards their government, when it became known, that through an imbecile fear, or timid respect for the Florentines, she had neglected to get possession of it. To this was added the contempt into which it had some time fallen from the losses suffered without, in the continued war carried on by the nobles, who had not listened to the agreement formerly pronounced by the Florentines, or who were discontented at being excluded from the first honours of their country. In all countries, and particularly in republics, there are turbulent men who take advantage of the misfortunes or the errors into which governments have fallen, to plot novelties, and excite the people to fresh disturbances. The faction of the so called twelve, or as it has been styled, of *the middle people*, excluded from the control, and united with the nobles, having alienated the minds of many places from the government, and gained by money the Captain Boldrino and his gang, availed themselves of the opportunity when the reformers were at discord, and by their manœuvres and power deprived them of all authority and drove them finally from the city. The principal families of the nobility such as the Salembeni, the Piccolomini, the Malavolti, &c., returned to Sienna, and with their adherents and friends established a new form of government. A magistracy was created, consisting of ten persons, four of the order of the twelve or middle people, four of that of the lesser number, or of the order of nine, and two of that of the greater number; they were called priors and governors; two others were afterwards added, and one of them was captain of the people. This revolution, like all others, was one of the greatest misfortunes which could have happened to the city of Sienna: more than 4,000 persons were obliged to fly, and amongst them, many of the most industrious artisans,

who went to enrich the kingdom of Naples, la Marche, and the Roman territory, with their property and industry; and this unfortunate emigration humbled the power of the Siennese republic to a degree that she never rose again to her former splendour*.

* Siennese Chronicle, *Rer. Ital.* tom. 15. Malavolti's History of Sienna, pag. 2. lib. 8. and 9.

CHAPTER IX.

CRUELITIES EXERCISED BY THE BROTHERS VISCONTI.—TREACHERY OF THE COUNT OF VIRTU, IN ORDER TO GET POSSESSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MILAN.—MOVEMENTS IN FLORENCE.—END OF THE DOMINION OF THE LORDS OF THE SCALA SIGNORI DELLA SCALA.—NEGOTIATIONS OF THE COUNT OF VIRTU WITH THE FLORENTINES AND SIENNESE, PUSHES ON HIS TROOPS AGAINST FLORENCE.—THE FLORENTINES CALL THE DUKE OF BAVARIA TO THEIR SUCCOUR.—ENTERPRISES OF THE ARMIES IN LOMBARDY.—FINE RETREAT MADE BY AUGUTO.—DEFEAT OF THE ARMY OF THE COUNT OF ARMAGNAC.—VICTORY OF AUGUTO.—PEACE BETWEEN THE COUNT OF VIRTU AND THE FLORENTINES.

THE Florentines after the defeat of the party of the *Ciampi* were enjoying tranquillity at home, when
1385. new disturbances broke out abroad. The potent house of the Visconti, mistress of the greater part of Lombardy, had been always an enemy of the Florentine republic, from jealousy of dominion and rivalry of faction, the Visconti being devoted to the Ghibelline, the republic to the Guelphan, party; and whenever the heads of that family possessed sense and courage, they exposed the Florentines to the greatest danger. We have already noticed the power the archbishop possessed, and the vast projects he entertained, which were only interrupted by death; his immense inheritance was then divided between three nephews, Matthew, Bernarbo, and Galeazzo. Lodi, Plaisane, Parma, Bologna, and Bobbio fell to the lot of Matthew: Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, with many other places, to Bernarbo; whilst

Galeazzo received Como, Novara, Vercelli, Asti, Alba, Alessandria, and Tortona: Milan and Genoa remained undivided, the dominion over which was to be equally exercised by the three brothers, if indeed this was possible. Matthew, wasted probably by his own excesses, soon died, when his states devolved upon his brothers. Galeazzo also acquired the city of Pavia, and became the founder of that celebrated university*. With immense sums of money he paid for his vanity of receiving Isabella, daughter of the King of France, in marriage for his son John Galeazzo, who assumed the name of Count of Virtù, from some places in Champagne erected into a county, which were given in dowry to him.

Fruitful as ancient history may be in tyrants who have dishonoured the human species, and, however, the cruelties of Busiris, Phalaris, and of the Mezentii may have been thought exaggerated by the fancy of poets, they are nevertheless far surpassed by those barbarities which cool contemporary historians relate to us of these two brothers Visconti; whose unfortunate subjects were burnt, hanged, or blinded, not for crimes but slight errors, little contraventions, or any trivial cause whatever of displeasure they might have given their sovereigns. The executions, carried into effect, were so atrocious, that were it not for the canons of probability, from which we dare not depart without destroying every historical foundation, they would be considered rather capricious fictions†. After the death of Galeazzo, the vast pos-

* Murat. Ann.

† Consult Peter Azario: *Annal. Mediol. Rer. Ital.* tom. 16. et Verri *Storia di Mil.* c. 13. Besides the cruelties and injustice he practised towards his subjects, we will mention a fact to prove what contempt Bernarbo had for the rights of the people and for the pontiff; the latter had expedited two Nuncios to treat of the controversies upon

sessions of the Visconti were divided between the Uncle Bernarbo and the Count of Virtù, and although a double marriage of a daughter of Bernarbo with the nephew, after the death of Isabella, and of a sister of his with Lewis, son of Bernarbo, ought to have increased the ties of friendship, together with those of blood, between the uncle and the nephew, the thirst of aggrandizing their dominion kept their minds in perpetual inquietude. Bernarbo, overbearing and insolent, governed his states with a despotic severity, alike detested by the people, and feared by his nephew, who suffered patiently the overbearing loftiness, and the subtleties practised by his uncle; and although he had equal right with him to the city of Milan, he ventured not to go there, leaving him to exercise the dominion, and contenting himself with remaining in Pavia, in an affected and indolent tranquillity, which covered only hatred and the most ambitious designs. In order the better to cloak them, he feigned himself to be pusillanimous and weak, little mindful of the affairs of the age, conversing with monks, and passing his time in the churches. When he thought the hour proper for him to shew himself what he was finally arrived, and knowing the universal hatred of Bernarbo, on account of the intolerable burthens which the people suffered, he caused it to be intimated to him he intended to visit the miraculous Madonna of Varese; and that, although he wished to embrace his uncle, he

Bologna: they found him upon the bridge of the river Lambro, and presented to him the bulls, reading which, and appearing to him little respectful, he cried out to the Nunzios, *Choose either to eat or drink*, giving them the choice either to eat the two bulls, or be thrown into the river: they chose the former, and were obliged to gnaw, and swallow the parchment, the silk cords, lead, &c. *Annal. Mediol.* One of these two was William, afterwards Pope Urban V.

begged of him, at the same time, to excuse his entry into Milan. He came forward accompanied by his guards, and a very numerous concourse, who carried concealed arms, together with Jacop Verme, and Anthony Porri, able leaders. Arrived in the vicinity of Milan, his uncle came out to meet him; they mutually embraced each other with the appearance of affection, when upon a signal given by the Count of Virtu, Bernarbo was arrested, with his two sons, and the following day the count, in riding through the city, was received with the most lively acclamations.

Thus not only the states of Bernarbo came into his power, but also the immense riches he had accumulated by heavy imposts, and which the new sovereign, in order to conciliate towards himself the affection of the people, considerably diminished*. Bernarbo remained seven months prisoner in the castle of Trezzo, after which he died, as it was thought, of poison, which was not difficult to suppose after the events we have described; but even the troubles of the mind are a slow poison, and political history abounds with diseases of this description, as

1386. medical with the physical. The Count of Virtu suddenly unmasked in the face of all Italy the immoderate ambition which governed him; and the Italian princes, particularly the Florentine republic, were amazed and panic-struck at his extraordinary power. He possessed the greatest penetration, an immense state and riches, with which at a time when Italy was full of those vagrant plunderers, called companies, he might, in a few days, set on foot the most formidable army.

Whilst the Florentine republic was thus observing him

* Ann. Mediol. Cor. Ist. Mil. Pog. Hist. lib. 3.

1387. with a jealous eye, the remains of the last agitations produced a new movement in Florence. Amidst the seditions, and the different parties which were alternately excited, and, prevailed, Benedict Alberti had been one of the most moderate of her citizens, who followed the party of the plebeians, in order to oppose the overbearing insolence of the great; and when the latter were in their turn oppressed, and the haughtiness of his own party too much increased, he had, to his credit favoured justice, and caused Strozzi and Scali to be brought to trial, who had trodden it under ground. In the heat of factions, the moderate become odious to all parties; the plebeians being repressed, the faction of the nobles, forgetful of the merits of Alberti, and of the services he had rendered to the republic, began to persecute him. He would have been able to arouse his party anew, but either seeing it cooled, or virtuously preferring the peace of his native country to his own, he went into voluntary exile, which was confirmed by the government; and after long wanderings, and visiting the Sepulchre of Christ, he died in Rhodes, a citizen worthy, on account of his virtues, of a better country, and a more glorious end. His ashes were brought to Florence, and honourably interred. Death extinguished all envy, and the remembrance of the virtues he practised has alone remained*. The movement, however, finished not with the sacrifice of this honest man; many families were sent to the confines, and others deprived of the right of employments by means of the wonted *admonition*; and, finally, a new poll was created, in which the confidential persons of the state were placed, from whom two were drawn on

* Sozom. loc. cit. Buonins. History, lib. 4. Amm. History, lib. 15,

every important occasion, who gave the preponderance to the scale in affairs of consequence.

In the mean time the suspicions of the Florentines increased in proportion with the power of the Count of Virtu. Of all the ample inheritance possessed by the Lords Scala (Signori della Scalla) Verona and Vicenza alone remained to the two illegitimate brothers Anthony and Bartholomew. Anthony, in order to govern
1388. alone, had caused his brother to be assassinated whilst he was going to visit a female friend in the night time, and to crown his wickedness, put on mourning for him, accusing the woman of the homicide, whom he ordered to be put to death. But a more crafty hypocrite, the Count of Virtu, seizing the moment in which he foolishly was waging war with Francis of Carrara, Lord of Padua, and who had been frequently defeated, uniting with him and holding secret conferences in Verona, succeeded in occupying it, and afterwards took possession of Vicenza which had been promised to Carrara. The Florentine ambassadors, sent there in order to prevent the ruin of the Lord Scala, and Verona from falling into the hands of the Count of Virtu, arriving too late, feigned that they were come to congratulate him. He spoke to them with the most impudent dissimulation, bewailing the little wisdom evinced by the Lord of Verona, whereby his subjects had chosen no longer to obey him; that by the acquisition of these cities, he only drew further inquietude and care upon himself; and even shed tears over his own labours and those of the Lord Scala (Signore della Scala.) The latter, who had been instigated to the war by the Venetians, sought shelter amongst them, and not being noticed, went a wanderer for a considerable time, alike despised and neglected by

all parties, a fate which generally attends the unfortunate; he soon died, leaving his family in a miserable situation to be maintained by the Venetian republic.

Thus terminated the dominion of the celebrated family of the Scala, which had aspired to nothing short of the throne of Italy. The Florentines, at the news of the prosperous successes of the count, as if they saw a war imminent, created the ten of authority, in order that they might take the necessary dispositions: they endeavoured to make an alliance between the Venetian and the Lords of Padua, but the Count of Virtu, who had been their ally, in order to destroy that of Scala, had now become their enemy, and had sufficient influence to prevent the alliance taking place. Nothing, however, more opportune to his designs could have happened, than the discord in Tuscany between the two powerful republics Florence and Sienna, which although they had been friends for a considerable time, but always somewhat rivals, were now near a rupture. We have already seen how ill the Siennese brooked the increase of power which the acquisition of Arezzo gave the Florentines, as they considered that city as taken away from them. The Lord of Cortona, Casali, had thrown off the friendship and protection which the Siennese offered him, and had placed himself in dependance upon the Florentines; finally, the Montepulciani, tired of the vexatious government of the Siennese, shook off the yoke, and had repeatedly wished to give themselves over to the Florentines, who, in fact, had refused to receive them. Sending, however, soldiers to keep order there, they gave a fundamental motive to the Siennese to take umbrage at it: a measure not very prudent in the time of the many fears which agitated Lombardy, and when it would have been more necessary for them to have strengthened the

bonds of friendship. The most imprudent step, however, was had recourse to by the Siennese, who, transported by hatred towards the Florentines, entered into negotiations to put themselves under the protection of the Count of Virtu; stimulating him to war against them, not foreseeing that by the occupation of Florence, the slavery of Sienna would inevitably follow. Hatred is always blind to fatal consequences: that sagacious prince would not have refused so good an opportunity to harass the Florentines, but that opportunity appeared not to him mature, as he wished first to destroy the Carrarese: having, therefore, given the Siennese good hopes in ambiguous words, and the finest promises to the Florentines not to meddle with the affairs of Tuscany, he turned his attention to carrying on the war with Padua. The suspicions of the Florentines were increased by the discovery that the gonfaloniere, John Buonaccorso, had been bribed by the count, and seeing his intrigues discovered had taken refuge in Sienna. Padua, in the mean time, with the other places of the Carrarese, incapable of resisting the forces of the Count of Virtu, fell into his power, Francis being persuaded to trust to the generosity of the count, who contented himself with keeping him prisoner; whilst the Florentines, getting intelligence of the secret manœuvres practised by the count, and that he awaited only the most opportune moment for attacking them, exerted themselves greatly to excite new external enemies against him. They invited the King of France, and the Duke of Bavaria, to occupy his states.

1399. In this year the Pontiff Urban VII. died, who was accused by his zeal of having given an easy origin to the schism. This pontiff was not deficient in ecclesiastical virtues, the splendour of which, however, was obscured by secular vices, amongst which may be

reckoned the thirst of aggrandizing his nephews as not of the least. A comparison, however, with his unworthy rival, the Antipope Clement, makes his memory more pleasing. The schism was not at an end: Peter Tommacelli was elected new pope in Rome by the name of Boniface XI.

The Count of Virtu was now preparing to attack the Florentines, and for that purpose had sent ^{1390.} Ubaldini into Tuscany to the aid of the Siennese, as well as to rouse their subjects to rebellion. He endeavoured, without effect, to occupy the fortress of San Miniato, a very important post, both from its vicinity to Florence, and the command it had of one of the most necessary roads for their commerce; but the blow entirely failed. He omitted not, however, going to Sienna, Pisa, and other places, inflaming the minds of the people against the Florentine republic. He met with the best reception from the Siennese, who having dispensed with their other magistrates, resolved to place themselves under the protection, or rather, control of the count, although no formal act of that kind was at that time made*. It was not so, however, in Pisa, where the Gambacorti who governed, being friends of the Florentines, not only refused the offers of the count, but made every thing known to Florence. Open war was in the mean time resolved upon, leaving aside all dissimulation, in which they were greatly surpassed by the count. He had made them as many enemies as he could of their neighbours: the Siennese, the Perugians, the Count of Poppi, the Malatesta, the Lords of Ferrara and of Mantua were united with him†. It may be said

* Malesp. Ist. de Sienna pag. 2. lib. 9. Sozomon. Rer. Ital. t. 16.

† Pogg. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 15.

that the Bolognese alone remained firm to the Florentines, as little dependance could be placed upon the outlawed Perugians and other cities, of the unfortunate sons of Bernarbo, and of Francis Novello, son of the old Francis of Carrara, who having already escaped from the hands of the Count of Virtù, had taken shelter at Florence. The count, who hitherto had acted like a fox*, found himself obliged to throw off the mask, and act openly; but even then the declaration of war was written with all artifice, since in order to give a pretext to the discontented Florentine to blame it, he protested before God, that they were the breakers of peace; that not the republic, but a few, as he called them, Arch-guelphans were the authors of it, and that dire necessity alone induced him to take up arms. The Florentines victoriously replied, by unveiling the artifices he had employed and bad faith to the public; the celebrated Coluccio Salutati dictated the reply, but it was necessary to conquer with arms rather than with manifestoes†.

Ubalдини and Savello were the generals of the count appointed to carry on war against the Florentines, who had taken into their pay Auguto and Orsino. For a considerable time the count had secretly occupied himself with this war, and had drawn so many lines that he appeared to have designed the total ruin of the Florentine republic, which rich, alike in treasure, and valuable citizens, was the only power which could arrest his vast and ambitious designs. Hostilities commenced in two

* *Comincia volpe, e alfin esce Leone.*—*ARIOS. Ital.*

Mentre che in forma fui d'ossa e di polpe

Che la Madre mi diè, l'opere mie

Non furon leonine, ma di volpe.—*DANTE.*

† See *Annal. Mediolan. Rer. Ital. Scrip.* tom. 16. where both the manifestoes are found mentioned.

parts. The troops of Perugia under Savello, and those of Sienna under Ubaldini, united with the troops the count kept there, passing by Chianti, and entering the valleys of the Arno and the Chiana, although they, in vain, endeavoured to take St. John's, got possession of Lucignano by treachery, and threatened Arezzo: the leader of this army, Ubaldini, who in military virtue was to be compared with Auguto, died suddenly*. The Bolognese, on the other hand, were attacked by Jacop Verme, who hoped to make himself master of the important castle of Primaleore, which he knew to be unprovided with any means of defence: Barbiano, captain of the Bolognese, however, got advice of this, and secretly sent succours in time, and frustrated the project of the enemy; the besiegers were driven back, and the besieged making a sortie, defeated them completely; many prisoners were made, and the preparations of siege burnt. The soldiers of the count made use, in the assault, of those mortar-pieces already introduced into the art of war, twenty of which were taken by the Bolognese†. This action was very important on account of the consequences which followed it: the enemy getting knowledge, after the defeat, that the Florentine succours, commanded by Auguto, had joined the Bolognese, thought they could no longer keep the field, and retreated to Modena. The succour, sent by the Florentines to Francis of Carrara, was useful by enabling him to re-enter Padua with facility‡. It happened otherwise in Verona, into which city (whence the soldiers of the count were driven whilst the party for the Carrarese and the former were contending for liberty) the enemy was enabled to re-enter.

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 15.

† Amm. Ist. lib. 15. ‡ Pogg. Ist. lib. 5. Cron. Bolog. loc. cit.

The gold of the Florentines had seduced the Duke of Bavaria into Lombardy to their aid, but being led astray by the secret artifices employed, and the promises held out to him by the Count of Virtu, he became rather a spectator of, than an actor upon, the theatre of war. The Marquis of Ferrara detached himself from the count, and the army of the alliance, amounting to 2,400 ^{1391.} lancers, and 15,000 infantry, led on by Auguto, had encamped at Mantua; the captain invited Gonzaga too, lord of that city, to separate himself from the count, thereby promising him not to injure his state. Nor would it have been difficult to induce him to it, since he had a daughter of the unfortunate Bernarbo for his wife, and his brother Charles being in the army of the alliance: but the count, who fought more with fraud than with arms, gave that credulous gentleman secretly to understand that the wife, in agreement with the brother, attempted his death; and in order to give strength to the calumny feigned that letters were concealed in her room. These letters were found by the husband, and a chancellor of the same was put to the torture, who under pain confessing whatever the husband wished, both were beheaded, and thus every means of adjustment was taken away*.

The Florentines had three captains. John Auguto, who, on account of his valour and the attachment he had borne to the republic, received the most liberal provisions, Louis of Capua, and after the departure of the Duke of Bavaria, the Count of Armagnac was taken into their pay. It was not difficult to induce the latter to fight against the Count of Virtu, as he had also to revenge his private wrongs, since Charles, son of Bernarbo, was

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 3. Amm. Hist. lib. 15.

his father-in-law : Louis of Capua scarcely arrived, when he distinguished himself by surprising a body of troops sent by the count to Sienna : coming up with them in the Maremma, he disbanded and dispersed them. Armagnac waited in Lombardy : he was to attack the states of the count on the side of Alessandria, whilst Auguto, penetrating into the Milanese and joining him, was to carry the war even to the gates of Milan. The enemy's force being greater than he imagined, the count was obliged to recall his troops from Tuscany, which gave leisure to Louis of Capua to retake Lucignano with other places, and devastate the plains of Sienna*. Auguto, marching from Padua, and passing the Adige, penetrated into the Brescian and Bergamescan territory, causing much loss : the people of the count, led on by Taddeo Verme, followed him, which Auguto perceiving, ordered a hidden body of troops to remain behind. Taddeo advanced without observing it, when Auguto turning round, attacked him whilst the concealed troops, coming out of ambush, assailed him on the other side. His people, seeing themselves surrounded, took to flight, leaving three hundred dead, and as many horse fell into the power of the enemy. The army was hastily recruited by the Count of Virtu, the more so as he knew of the approach of Armagnac with considerable force : about 3,000 lancers, and 10,000 bowmen and other infantry, composed the army of Verme : Auguto was inferior in force, and the delay of Armagnac had exposed him to difficulty, because, getting scanty in provisions, he was at a distance from Padua, whilst the force of the count was increasing upon him : he saw himself obliged to retreat, but this was difficult as he had to pass various

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 3.

rivers, such as the Oglio and the Adige, in the sight of the enemy. He made a masterly retreat, however, first attacking and defeating the people of Verme, and returned, covered with glory and rich in booty, to the confines of the Paduan territory*.

The Count of Virtu was in danger of losing every thing, when the imprudent juvenile ardour of Armagnac proved his salvation. He appeared and disappeared like lightning. His army was large for those times, writers making it amount to between 10 and 15,000 horse, with a proportionate number of infantry. The Count of Virtu, fearing for Alessandria, had made Verme enter it with his best troops: whilst he was besieging the castle, Armagnac, full of personal bravery but insolent and rash, wished to reconnoitre Alessandria with only five hundred of his men, and transported by national fury, began to insult the enemy with reproachful language, inviting him to come out. When Verme was certain that no other troops were around, he fell upon them in great force, and enveloped them on all sides: Armagnac, after making the bravest resistance, giving proofs of the greatest valour, and the great slaughter of his men, was taken prisoner with the rest of his comrades, and died in a very short time either from his wounds or from inflammation. This was a thunderbolt against his army. Probably his best officers were either killed or taken prisoners, and his men wanting a chief, endeavoured to retreat towards the Alps; but being betrayed by the guides, followed up by Verme, and assailed by

* In Pogg. Hist. lib. 3., this fine retreat of Auguto is related at length, but that it happened after the defeat of Armagnac, mentioning various jests of these two leaders; other historians, as the Estense Chronicle and Ammirato, fix it at this time, if there were not two retreats.

the Mountaineers, they were for the most part destroyed. The number of prisoners made in this pursuit, was very great; amongst the rest the Florentine ambassadors Rinaldo Gianfigliuzzi and John Ricci, all the military chest, and the immense treasure of the Florentines, 6,000 horse, and an innumerable host of soldiery, who were sent back to France, those persons alone being detained, who were able to pay for their ransom *.

This event highly discouraged Florence: the Count of Virtu, who had seen ruin coming upon him, and who had hitherto suffered even in his own states, thought now of carrying it into those of the enemy: he ordered Verme to pass into Tuscany by the road of Sarzana, who commanded above 3,000 lancers†, and 5,000 infantry, besides the many Siennese, Pisans, and all those who as outlaws or enemies to the Florentine government joined him. The Florentines recalled Auguto from Lombardy, who hastening rapidly with forced marches, found himself soon in front of his rival. Both were leaders of great name: Verme had made himself illustrious particularly from the defeat of Armagnac, who was subdued, however, more by his own imprudence than the valour of the enemy, but the public judge of personages who act upon the theatre of the world more from the great effects they produce, than their circumstances: the celebrity of Auguto was supported by many events; and the last retreat particularly, which he had carried into execution across a hostile soil traversed by so many rivers, and with superior enemies always in his flank, had covered him with glory. They traversed many parts of

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 3. Cron. Piacen. Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 16. Annal. Mediol. Corio Ist. di Mil. Amm. Ist, Fior. lib. 15.

† Three horses were reckoned for each lance.

Tuscany with various marches, without even coming into contact, Verme, however, always retreating before Auguto, at times, through the Florentine, at times through the Pistoiese, territory. He finally halted at Poggio a Caiano, and his enemy at Sizzano, and remained there two days. Verme being dislodged from thence the rear-guard was assailed by Auguto, composed for the greater part of infantry, and here a furious battle took place, in which the Lombards were defeated: 2,000 infantry were said to be slain, and about 1,000 taken prisoners, amongst whom was Taddeo Verme, nephew of the general, with many of the principal officers*. All the rear guard was sacrificed to the safety of the remaining army, which retreating, and continually followed up by Auguto, met with no other considerable loss†. He afterwards took up a position between Calci and the Serchio, in a manner to intercept the provisions which were brought from Pisa down the Arno to Florence; whenever he received account that they had left Pisa, he ordered a part of his men to pass the Arno, and make booty of them: a large supply to the Florentines was escorted by two hundred lancers and five hundred infantry, commanded by Beltrot, an Englishman, and

* Leonardo Bruni states the number much lower, that is, little more than seven hundred killed, and two hundred prisoners, and this is most probable.

† This defeat is probably exaggerated by Ammirato (Ist. lib. 15.) Since a small army, after such a loss, may be considered almost destroyed. Nevertheless Jacop Verme kept the field, and continued to infest the Florentines. We have seen that Bruni makes the loss much less. Poggio himself describes it more as a skirmish than a battle (Hist. lib. 3.); nevertheless Poggio is accused by Sannazzaro of partiality for his native country: it is true, that an historian of that age, namely, Soromeno the Pistoiese, is exactly of accord with Ammirato.

Hugo of Monforte. Verme got information thereof from the secretary of Gambacorti Appiano, who secretly corresponded with the Count of Virtu. The convoy was attacked, and Beltrott meanly retired without fighting. Monforte, remaining alone, fought valiantly, but was taken prisoner, and the convoy lost*.

Although the enmity between the Florentines and the count was not diminished, both parties were greatly exhausted by the war. The losses had been reciprocal. The Count of Virtu perceived that, in order to oppress the Florentines, something was wanting, namely, the occupation of Pisa; but it became necessary to let the enemy slumber upon that danger, whilst he himself reposed for new preparations. Mutual exhaustion made them lend an ear to the propositions of peace, which were began to be treated of, and were afterwards concluded in Genoa; the mediators of which were Anthony Adorno, Doge of Genoa, Richard Caracciolo, Grand Master of Rhodes, and the community of Genoa itself. After so much lavish of treasure and blood, both parties remained as before the war; all the cities were comprehended in the peace; every thing that had been taken was mutually restored, with few exceptions; the young Carrara remained Master of Padua; and a general pardon was granted to those who had rather to dread the consequences of peace than those of war†.

* Poggio. Hist. lib. 3. Amm. Hist. lib. 15.

† Pogg. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 15. Sozomen, loc. cit.

CHAPTER X.

APPIANO BECOMES MASTER OF PISA.—DISTURBANCES IN FLORENCE.—DEATH OF AUGUTO.—WAR WITH THE PISANS.—EVENTS OF LOMBARDY.—THE COUNT OF VIRTU PURCHASES PISA FROM THE SON OF APPIANO.—GETS POSSESSION OF SIENNA AND PERUGIA.—PENANCES AND PROCESSIONS.—CONTAGION IN FLORENCE.—CONSPIRACY OF THE OUTLAWS DISCOVERED.—DESCENT OF THE EMPEROR INTO ITALY.—THE COUNT OF VIRTU GETS POSSESSION OF BOLOGNA.—DIES.—HIS CHARACTER.—INTRIGUES OF THE FLORENTINES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PISA.—THE VENETIANS BECOME MASTERS OF PADUA.—DEATH OF THE CARRARESE.—ENTERPRISES OF THE FLORENTINES AGAINST PISA.—ORIGIN OF SFORZA.—PISA SURRENDERS TO THE FLORENTINES.—CONDITIONS OF THE SURRENDER.

THE general peace almost always gave rise to another kind of warfare: a crowd of mercenary soldiers, ^{1392.} who were thrown out of employment, collected as usual under some illustrious assassin, and despoiled or imposed taxes upon the cities already ruined by war. These brigands, united at present, as had been customary with them, in great number, and it became necessary for the Florentines, the Pisans, the Siennese, and the Lucchese, to free themselves from the vexations to which they were continually subjected. From fear of them, or probably rather of the Count of Virtu, and under that pretext, the Florentines entered into a league with the Bolognese, with the Lords of Padua and Ferrara, of Ravenna, Faenza, and Imola, afterwards joined also by the Lord of Mantua. The peace that had been con-

cluded was not unattended with many fears or suspicions, and what happened at Pisa, only contributed to increase them. We have seen at the end of the last war, that the Count of Virtu entertained designs for the acquisition of that city, and the following are the means by which he succeeded in completing them. Pisa for a long time had been governed by the Gambacorti family, who were expelled by the Emperor Charles, and had afterwards returned. Vanni Appiano, of the district of Florence, being attached to that family, was arrested and put to death; his son Jacop went a wanderer for some time, and when the family Gambacorti re-entered Pisa, and regained their former power, he was also recalled and well received, and being of a pliant disposition and manners, and tutored in the school of misfortune during his exile, he entirely gained the favour of Peter Gambacorti, who particularly availed himself of his labours, in the administration of affairs. That family had been always united with the Florentines. Peter favoured them to a degree that in the disputes between them and the Pisans, he evinced a partiality for the former which was very imprudent. The Count of Virtu had in vain endeavoured in the last war to alienate them from their friendship: he had succeeded, however, in gaining Appiano, who had frequently revealed important secrets to the generals of the Count. Peter, gifted with an exceeding kindness of disposition, in the midst of the diffidence produced by factions, had given opportunity to Appiano, by leaving him in the management of affairs, to form a powerful party to himself, and to alienate minds from him by imputing all the odious transactions to him. The Count of Virtu maintained and increased Peter's confidence in Appiano, by the praises which he was continually ascribing to this man, and strengthened his party by his

power and riches. A prince, finally, whom crime cost nothing, lost still less by counselling it, and he instigated Jacop Appiano to make himself master of Pisa, to which that ambitious man easily consented. Peter was warned by some of his danger, and particularly by the vicegerent of the Florentines, in the Valdinievole; but, inspired with a confidence worthy of a better age, he paid no regard to it. Finally, this villain, in whom the thirst of rule prevailed over the remembrance of benefits he had received, gave the necessary dispositions for consummating the enterprise. His son Vanni came from Milan, who, being made prisoner in the last war by the Florentines, had been ransomed by the Count of Virtu, by an exchange even of one of the first citizens of Florence. He introduced troops into Pisa, under pretext of defending his life, which he reported to have been attempted by Rossa Lanfranchi; but this man was one day killed by the people of Appiano, after which action the design being mature, he hastened with his people against Peter, who, being without protection, was easily put to death. He then usurped the government of Pisa, under the name of captain and defender of the people. Appiano afterwards demanded succour from the Count of Virtu, by placing himself, in a certain measure, in dependance upon him, and the count, in order to conciliate greater dignity for Appiano, sent him a solemn embassy, proffering him assistance. Thus a powerful city, a rival once of Florence, and formerly her friend, became on a sudden, an ally of her greatest enemy*, her dependant, and by another step so easily her subject.

Jacop enjoyed indeed the fruits of his treachery, but a

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 3. Tronci Ann. Pis. Maragoni. Cron. di Pisa Amm. Ist. l. 16. Sozom. Spec. His. loc. cit.

loud cry was raised against him throughout all Italy, and particularly throughout Tuscany. The golden benevolence of Peter, the generosity with which he had brought up, and raised his servant, opposed to his atrocious ingratitude, even in times wherein treachery and iniquity were become so usual, excited universal horror. The muses even of that age, failed not in execrating the cruel perfidy evinced by Jacop. A Florentine wrote a poetical vision, called *the Triumph of Traitors* *, (il trionfo de' Traditori) in which passing in review the numerous bands in the plain of Asciano, the sovereign of them, Judas, by a solemn function yields the primacy to Jacop, by taking his crown from the forehead, and placing it upon the head of Appiano.

With such activity, the count waged war with the Florentines, even in peace, and advanced with fresh steps

* The poem is not in print : it is found in the Magliabecchian library, Polchetto 1. Codic. 93, amongst those which have been placed in proper order by the learned and accurate Abbé Follini. The following is the title of it : " A Treaty made by Manetto Giacheri, of Florence, is begun, in which he relates having found and spoken with the greatest part of the most famous traitors who have been in the world ; and says at the end, that he sees Judas, with an infinite number of greater and higher traitors, who have been in the world, place a crown of gold on the head of Messer Jacopo d'Appiano, as the most sovereign traitor who was ever born. The poem is in third rime, begins

Ajuti il mio intelletto l' alto ingegno

Ends,

Accio' che al mondo ne sia gran memoria.

It may be inferred that the poet was contemporary, because in that band he finds a certain Michael of his acquaintance, to whom he says :

So so che vita abbandonò tuoi rami

Nel mille con trecento tie, e novanta

A nove de' de Luglio ed or me chiami, &c.

Some Pisans are mentioned there ; as Lanfranchi, Ser Corlo da Scorno, &c.

every day in his ambitious projects. Since the year 1380, he had been created by the Emperor Vencislaus imperial viceroy, a title attached to his person, and which descended not to his children. He afterwards obtained that of Duke of Milan from the same Emperor, to whom he paid 100,000 florins in gold; twenty-five cities were comprehended in the dukedom; the three cities, Pavia, Valenza, and Casale, were erected into a new county, and he was thus fast approaching the desired title of King of Italy, of which he already
 1393. ruled over so large a portion*.

The two parties of the nobles and the plebeians were still alive in Florence; the latter, however humbled, appeared not sufficiently so, for any pretext served as an excuse for persecuting those who once had favoured it. Thomas Albizzi, the Gonfaloniere, had inherited the disposition, together with the power of the unfortunate Peter his uncle, and had adopted his maxims. He was head of the party which was an enemy of the people, and harboured an enmity towards the Alberti, although they were very much humbled after the expulsion of Benedict; nevertheless, upon the pretext of some intrigues being discovered against the government, the bailiwick was ordered. Whilst they were assembled, and condemning the Alberti to exile, the common people took to arms, and furiously hastened to the house of the Medici, calling Vieri and Michael, and shouting out (as Silvestro once had done) that they would now be liberated from the tyranny of the nobles. Vieri wanted only the will to make himself head of the city; but, reflecting upon the instability of the favour of the people, and the danger of not being able to bridle this ferocious animal, broken as

* Verri, History of Milan, chap. 14.

it had once done its cage, as happened in the times of Silvester his cousin, he used mild words, went to meet the nobles, exhorted them to moderation, and appeased the people by promising them justice: but this moderation and justice were never made use of, as the Alberti were almost all sent to the confines or imprisoned. How tyrannical the government was, whatever party held the reins, is clearly shewn by the following fact. Rinaldo Gianfigliazzi, one of the first citizens, distinguished for his fidelity in the exercise of various offices he had held, had promised his daughter in marriage to one of the house of Alberti, and an Alberti was married to Jacop Gianfigliazzi. Such was the hatred towards Alberti, that Rinaldo was ordered to be called by the eight of the guard and severely reprimanded; and was obliged also to ask pardon in the most humble language, and promise that the matrimony of his daughter should not be proceeded in, which, however, some years afterwards took place, from the constancy of the girl, who would have no other husband than Alberti. These facts were not unfrequent, and the government was called republican, and took for its motto, *libertas* *.

The celebrated Aguto, who had been always in the service of the republic, died about this time. The state, in order to increase his attachment to it, had already made rich provisions for him, his wife†, and his daughters, and few citizens have been honoured with such splendid funereal pomp: he was buried in the Holy Mary of the Flower (Santa Maria del Fiore,) upon the walls of which Paul Uccello painted his likeness which

* Amm. lib. 16. Macch. History, lib. 3. Pogg. History, lib. 3.

† His wife was natural daughter of Bernarbo Visconti.—Ann. Mediol. Rer. Ital. Script, tom. 16.

is still to be seen there. He was certainly one of the bravest leaders, similar, however, in character and deportment to other heads of brigands who infest Italy, whose principal aim, indifferent to every other object, consisted in gain and the preservation of their fellow assassins *. Having finally attached himself to the Florentines, he changed for the honourable office of their leader, that of an infamous ringleader of companies, and remained faithful to them until his death. So great was the fame of his valour, even beyond Italy, that Richard II., King of England, demanded and obtained from the republic, the bones of this his celebrated subject †.

1396. During the abuse the Florentine nobility were making of their re-conquered authority, and in the loud murmurings which arose amongst the plebeians, one citizen, animated probably with the best intentions, ventured to speak of a moderate reform. Donato Acciajoli, who was respectable both for the honours with which he was decorated, and the authority he enjoyed ‡, observed the outrages which were daily committed with displea-

* The determined cruel disposition of this man is proved by a singular event. In the year 1371, he had sacked Faenza with his troops : two of his corporals entering a nunnery, and finding a beautiful girl, disputed about her by arms. Auguto, arriving, and wishing to remove the occasion of the dispute, gave the girl a stab in the breast, and killed her.—Cron. San. Rex. Ital. Scrip. tom. 15.

† See the letter of reply of the republic to the King, mentioned by Manni in the life of John Auguto. Franco Sacchetti, in tale 181, relates an anecdote of this captain : two friars going to see him, at the castle of Montecchio, a mile from Cortona, they saluted him saying : *God give you peace* ; when he answered : *God take away alms from you*. The brothers, astonished, asked him why he answered so : *Do you not know*, said he, *that I live by war, and that in peace I die of hunger* ?

‡ He was perhaps the principal citizen ; had a brother a Cardinal, another Duke of Athens, a third Archbishop of Potrasso : had twice

sure, and formed the chimerical design of letting those who were misguided by passion clearly see that there was still one man who could speak seriously and in cool reason, to those who were ruled by phrensy.

Supported upon equity he proposed a reform, and the recall of the exiles; and as he proposed by the voice of reason alone, and without arms, or at the head of a threatening populace, he was not at first attended to; when afterwards insisting, in a tone which bore the appearance of threat, he was accused of conspiring with force against the government, and was in danger of his life. He was then obliged to implore mercy, and was banished to Barletta. His intentions appear certainly to have been pure: he had sought the legal road, when the discontent of the plebeians being known, he might have done what Vieri Medici had refused to do, place himself at their head, and his propositions were conformable to exact justice; but he was little acquainted with the disposition of parties with whom moderation, a virtue in any other time, becomes a crime*. Some outlawed Florentines endeavoured in the following year, to produce innovations in Florence, in a manner more adapted to the times. They were well acquainted with the discontent of the plebeians: Maso Albizzi, odious to them, was head of the party which governed Cavicuilli, Ricci, Medici, Spini, Girolami, Cristofano of Carlone, were in Bologna: their relations and friends insinuated

exercised the first offices of gonfaloniere of justice, of ambassador many times, as well as senator of Rome. Of his son Laodamia was born of whom, the Grand-duke Corsima I. was great nephew.—Amm. Ist. Fior. lib. 16.

* Buonin. Florentine History, lib. 4. Leonar. Bruni, Hist. Fior. lib. 11. Amm. lib. 16. Macch. Hist. lib. 3. Sozom. Epis. His. loc. cit.

to them that by repairing secretly to Florence, putting Albizzi to death, and calling the people to their aid, they would easily effect a change in the government; nor was it indeed improbable. They succeeded in penetrating secretly into Florence, entering by the Arno, and were received by their companions. It was the good fortune of Albizzi, that he had left the square of St. Peter, where he had been watched by the spies, before the conspirators arrived there, who, going in search of him, fell upon two other enemies, murdered them, and shouting out, called upon the people to rise in favour of liberty, but the latter who would probably have moved had they heard of the death of Albizzi, and had been prepared for the movement, abandoned them to their fate, who seeking refuge in vain in St. Mary of the Flower (St. Maria del Fiore), were taken and beheaded*.

The Duke of Milan, who, if unable to overpower his enemies with arms, beat them almost always with stratagem, had continued an almost universal confederacy for Italy, in order to lull them to sleep. Those, however, to whom his character was best known, although they refused not to enter into it, made another more secret and natural; since common interests alone form the true bonds of confederacies. The Florentines had made a solemn treaty with the King of France, in which their true allies, the Bolognese, and the lords of Mantua, Padua, and Ferrara were included. The Duke of Milan, knowing this was directed against him, had prepared himself for new hostilities against the Florentines, and, in order to fall down upon them more easily and carry

* Buonin. Florentine History, lib. 4. Brune's History, lib. 11. Macch. History, lib. 3. Amm. lib. 16.

the war into their homes, under pretext of sending succour to Appiano, harassed by companies of brigands, had caused troops to defile upon the Pisan territory, whose march was hastened by Appiano himself, who, ambitious too and greedy of aggrandizement, invited them to their war, in which he hoped to make himself master of Lucca. The troops of Lombardy under the command of the Count Alberic of Barbiano were continually increasing, a man highly renowned in arms, and hostilities began before the solemn declaration of war was made. Appiano endeavoured to occupy San Miniato by means of Mangiatori, one of the first men of that city, who, on the evening of the 21st February, having murdered Davanzati mayor of the Florentines, and occupying the palace with his people in the night, called the people to liberty, and invited them to shake off the yoke of the Florentines, but the former, shouting Florence for ever! (*Viva Firenze*), hastened to besiege the palace. Mangiadori always entertained hopes of holding the city by the arrival of the succours of Cecolino Michellotti: according to the plan concerted, he was to introduce troops into it through a gate of the palace which opened without the very walls of the city: but after sustaining a furious assault for six hours, fire being set to the palace, and the succour not appearing, he left it from the outer part, and saved himself by flight. Caccolino arrived only at the dawn of day, and his corps was defeated and dispersed by the people who had hastened from various parts to the succour of San Miniato*.

This event made the Florentines decide without hesi-

* Pogg. History, lib. 3. Amm. lib. 16. Bruni, lib. 11. Sozom. Spec. His. loc. cit.

tation upon war, for which they prepared themselves unwillingly because a large party in the republic approved not of it. There were various causes for the dissension, of which the hatred borne towards those who governed, was the principal, as they were accused of fomenting wars in order to increase their own reputation, and to keep those citizens in silence, who were injured by them, and had reason to complain. The event of San Miniato, however, the inroads made by Barbiano upon the territory of the republic, and the bold armaments of the duke put to silence all opponents, and war was resolved upon. In the mean time the troops of their enemy led on by Count Alberic, who were in the Siennese territory, scoured a great part of Tuscany in Chianti, upon the Greve, descending to Pozzolatico and causing considerable damage upon the Emma; whence, passing to Signa, and trying that castle, in vain they returned to the Siennese, boasting of having scoured the enemies' country so near to the capital. The troops of the Florentines were chiefly upon the Lucchese territory, in front of John Barbiano, where most was to be feared; the Florentines had taken into their pay Bartolomy Boccanera, with his company, declaring afterwards Bernardone Serre their captain-general. Boccanera, either that he had before detested Bernardone, or that he unwillingly saw him preferred, would not obey, and even slighted him publicly: Bernardone, irritated at this, one day when he appeared before him without followers, ordered him to be arrested and beheaded; an event which indeed made a great noise, but was not disapproved of by the republic. The war, however, in Tuscany, went on but slowly, the two parties, for the most part, standing upon the defensive: but it was not so in Lombardy, where the duke had sent a numerous body

against the Lord of Mantua, commanded by Jacop Verme, whilst on the side of Verona, Ugolotto Bianciardo had marched with other troops to the same side: the Florentines, with all their allies, sent succours there, of which Charles Malatesta was declared captain-general, a man distinguished both in council and in arms. Borgoforte was attacked by Jacop Verme with the view of breaking the bridge upon the Po, but was bravely defended by Malatesta for about two months; when, Verme, profiting of a furious wind, drove some rafts full of sticks, pitch, and other combustible lighted substances, against the bridge. The size of these substances was such, that, unable to pass under the arches, they were stopped at the bridge, which, every attempt to save it being useless, was burnt, and more than a thousand men, who stood upon it for defence, were killed. The naval force of the duke, which was very strong, and situated above the bridge, run down upon that of the Lord of Mantua, defeated, and took the greatest part of it*. Verme then penetrated into the heart of Mantua, and having made a great booty of cattle, advanced with his troops even as far as Porta Cerese.

The affairs of the Lord of Mantua now appeared desperate, when Malatesta, having encouraged the confederates, went to Venice, Bologna and Ferrara, soliciting succour, and shewing the common danger in the ruin of Gonzaga. Governolo, which was situated near the conflux of the Mincio and the Po, opened the only road by which Mantua could receive succour, was closely besieged and near falling, when Malatesta, coming to its aid, with a powerful fleet and troops, attacked the force

* See *Annales Esten.* Jacop. Delayt. *Rer. Ital.* tom. 18., which deserve more credit than Pozzio, who denies the burning of the bridge. See also Corio's *History of Milan.*

of Bianciardo, and was enabled to penetrate far enough to afford assistance to Governolo. The Ferrarese fleet defeated the Milanese; Gonzaga came with all his force to Governolo; Bianciardo was attacked and completely put to rout; Verme, who was with the army in the heart of Mantua, and whose retreat might have been cut off by the defeat of Bianciardo, retired precipitately at the sight of that overthrow, almost without fighting. Six thousand prisoners, two thousand horses, fifty armed ships, seventy laden with provisions, fell into the hands of the conquerors, and, in a few hours, the affairs of Lombardy entirely changed aspect*.

These events liberated Tuscany from all hostility, the Duke of Milan having hastily recalled the Count Alberic into Lombardy with a greater part of the forces. The confederacy abating in vigour, as is customary, and the ducal army receiving reinforcements, gained new advantages over Gonzaga: but the power of this prince began to give umbrage even to the Venetians, who fearful of its increase, made propositions of peace, at which finding the Duke obstinate, they also joined the league. This step rendered him more pliant, and accepting of their mediation, he made a truce for ten years, with the restitution of all the places to the Lord of Mantua. The mind of the duke, however, which was always unquiet, and directed towards aggrandizement, carried on a war of negotiation in this peace, with greater success than with arms. With the view of ruining the Florentine republic, he had always turned his attention towards the acquisition of Pisa, where Jacop Appiano, already old, ruled under his protection, and who had lost his son Vanni, capable of sustaining the paternal power, both

* Delayt. Ann. Esten.—Corio's History of Milan.

with arms and with council, Gherardo alone remaining, who was very inferior both in ability and courage. The duke thought it was no longer time to defer. A large body of troops of the duke, as auxiliaries of Appiano, were in this city, under the command of Paul Savello and other captains. These men, together with a minor

^{1398.} friar, going one evening to visit the old Jacop, advised him to give the citadel of Pisa, Cascina, Leghorn and the castle of Piombino into their hands, in recompense for the assistance and protection that the duke afforded them. Appiano, surprised and confused at the unexpected request, and seeking pretexts for postponement, the commissaries left him with threats that they would do by force what he would not grant them with good grace. Nothing is more dangerous than delay in conspiracies already discovered. The blow being deferred, Appiano caused his people to be armed as much as he was able in the night, and the morning following were conducted by his son Gherardo, against Savella, who, after an obstinate opposition, was wounded and taken prisoner *.

It would have appeared that after this event, Appiano ought entirely to have detached himself from the Duke of Milan, and gone over to the Florentines: a treaty was entered into, but he considered it more convenient to remain united with the duke, by dissimulating that the enterprise was undertaken without his consent. Shortly afterwards, the old Jacop died, and was succeeded in the command by his son Gherard. Some months before his death he made him captain of the people, and all the armed force of Pisa had sworn the oath of allegiance to him: but this youth possessed neither the courage nor

* Pogg. History, lib. 3. Amm. lib. 16. Sozom. Spec. His. loc. cit.

the ability of his father. Persuaded by the duke, who had always directed his attention towards the acquisition of Pisa, and perhaps despairing too of keeping the command of it in the midst of so many enemies, he agreed to sell the city to him for 200,000 florins in gold, preserving to himself Piombino, with a few castles, and the island of Elba *. The Florentines, getting knowledge of this, sent ambassadors to Gerard, to prevent the contract; he received them with fair words, but as they remained constantly with him, and their presence was an obstacle to the negotiation, they were dismissed, and the sale was afterwards concluded. The resolution of Gerard was probably dictated by pusillanimity, but it bore the appearance of the most consummate prudence. It was difficult to preserve the possession of a city which was so often agitated by seditions, and considering the successive events, it is easy to see that either death or exile, the fate of the rulers of Pisa, would have been also his lot; whilst by the concession, he retired to Piombino with an inferior state, but one less envied, and propagated a family which preserved it for more than a century. The Florentines, who had endeavoured in vain to disturb this contract, were insulted by the duke after its fulfilment by a conciliating embassy, in which, imparting to them the acquisition he had made of Pisa, he promised them to live and conduct himself as a good neighbour †. He had, however, provided that city with numerous and excellent troops. There was a party in it who wished to declare themselves free: these citizens had offered the same sum to Gerard, who replied, it was

* Brun. lib. 11. Pogg. Ist. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 16. Buonin. Ann. Rer. Ital. tom. 21.

† Buonin. Ist. Fior. lib. 4.

no longer in time : and, in fact, the armed people of the duke, whom he had introduced into Pisa, were sufficient to prevent it. The citizens too, who had favoured the sale, very soon repented when they perceived that the duke, by an increase of duties and taxes, wished rapidly to reimburse himself for the sum he had paid to Apiano*.

This blow was more than gaining a battle over the Florentines ; and what more afflicted them, Sienna too again came into his power, at the desire even of the Siennese themselves, who had been gained over to him by his artifices. Since the year 1390, the council-general of this city had come to the determination of giving the command over it to Visconti : but from succeeding occurrences the formal act of submission had
 1399. never taken place†. It was now carried into execution with all solemnity, and the conditions were mutually established. With the dominion over Sienna, many fortresses, and particularly that of Salamone, fell into the power of Visconti, whereby the Florentines could be greatly molested in their commerce, the only road for the import and exportation of their merchandise being in the hands of their enemy. A few months afterwards Perugia too, in spite of the pecuniary powers of the Florentines, met with the same fate through the means of Ceccolino Michelotti. The count attempted a blow also upon Lucca, by persuading Guinigi to put Lazzaro his brother to death, who was almost lord of it : but derived no other satisfaction than occasioning the

* Tronci, Ann. Pis.

† Malav. History of Sienna, par. 2. lib. 9. 10. The ducat of gold with the snake was then coined in Sienna. Verri. Stor. di Mil. c. 14. Ann. Sanesi, Rer. Ital. tom. 19.

commission of an useless fratricide, and bringing the alike foolish and infamous brother to the scaffold*. Thus in the midst of peace this man carried on the most pernicious war with the Florentines.

The end of the fourteenth century was now fast approaching. This age had been distinguished not less than the preceding by the fury of factions, by effusion of blood, commission of crimes, the misery of nations, and by a general ferocity of manners. The transition from wickedness to devotion is not far removed; since when the fury of passions abates for a moment, remorse, the fear of death, and of invisible punishments lead men to seek in true religion, or even in the most extravagant superstition, the expiation of their crimes: and the changes then become rapid and extreme. During the various periods of these ferocious centuries, a religious fervour was kindled, making whole populations contrite and penitent, which passing from one city to another, beat themselves with scourges, and chanted sacred hymns. Since the last century these had been either assembled by the missionaries, or impelled by some extraordinary physical or moral event. The celebrated friar, John of Vicenza, once collected such a multitude upon the banks of the Adige to hear him, that Paride of Cereta† made them amount, whatever may be the exaggeration, to 400,000 persons. The year 1260 was called by Sigonio‡ the year of devotion, because there was a general emotion of penitence throughout Europe. The numerous companies which passed from one city to another, were called *the beaten* (*dei battuti*) from the stripes which they gave themselves for mortification;

* Sozom. Pist. Spec. Hist. loc. cit.

† Mur. Rer. Ital. scr. loc. 8.

‡ De regno Ital. lib. 19.

various princes of Lombardy, who dreaded popular assemblies, prohibited their entrance into their states, and Turriani, who then governed the state of Milan, caused six hundred pair of gibbets to be erected, threatening to hang them upon them if they approached. In the year 1335 Friar Venturino of Bergamo, a Dominican attended by ten, and according to others, by 30,000 persons uniformly dressed, went to Rome; but was called by the suspicious Pontiff John XXII to Avignon, and imprisoned there. In this year, too, pious enthusiasm again made its appearance; it is not well known whence it took its rise, whether in Spain, in England, or in France; it was brought, however, into Italy from Provence*. According to the amount of the population of each city a procession was made of five, ten, or twenty thousand persons of both sexes who proceeded from city to city; and were enveloped in a white hood which covered even the face, and were therefore called the *companies of the white*. (*Compagnie de' bianchi*.) They reposed in the cathedral and public squares, crying out *Peace and mercy* (*pace e misericordia*) beat themselves with rods of discipline, and chanted sacred hymns †; and were fed by the public, although they asked nothing more than bread and water. The pilgrimage generally lasted nine or ten days, after which they returned to their homes. Example, either good or bad, becomes contagious: the people of the towns, which had been visited, kindled with the same fervour, went to visit each other; thus the devout processions extended from town to town, and

* Giorg. Stella. Ann. Genuen. Rer. Ital. l. 17, describes these processions at length.

† They sang particularly the hymn *Stabat, mater dolorosa*, which was made at this time.

first came into Italy by the coast of Genoa. Upon the arrival, at the sight, at the prayers, of these pious pilgrims, the most obdurate hearts became melted, hatreds were forgotten, enemies reconciled, and all became sanctity and religion. The Lucchese, to the number of 3,000, visited Pistoia and Florence: here the Pistoiese also came, to the number of 4,000: about 40,000 Florentines put on white, and 20,000, with the Bishop of Fiesole at their head, went to Arezzo. Processions spread themselves throughout the whole of Italy. The Venetians, however, and the Duke of Milan would not suffer them in their states, and even Pope Boniface IX. forbade them approaching Rome. Politics, probably, or the disorders which these processions gave rise to, contributed to this refusal, since it cannot be denied that considerable irregularities were mentioned by respectable authors to have been committed, and it was easy for such to take place amidst so great a multitude of both sexes living confusedly together both day and night, during the whole time of their pilgrimage. Every time these devout movements took place, societies or religious companies were instituted in various cities, who wishing to perpetuate the pious rite, fixed upon assembling on certain days, to sing hymns and beat themselves as the former were accustomed to do. We are not indebted, however, to these pilgrimages for the origin of sacred companies, which are derived from far more distant times, and probably from those of Charlemagne; but new institutions of the same, with particular laws and statutes, were made on such extraordinary occasions*.

In all times, however, this religious fervour produced only an ephemeral fruit: when the short lucid interval

* Murat. Antich. Ital. Dis. 65.

was over, the passions rose again, and with them enmities returned, the fury of factions and effusion of blood. That pious compunction appeared not to appease the wrath of heaven, or even prevent a scourge which afflicted Italy in the following year, namely, a terrible mortality, usually called by historians, the pest or plague, although it was not in part the physical cause of it: since a multitude of persons, who assemble and live negligently, crowd in close habitations, may contract an epidemic fever, and communicate it widely to a population. Florence was so afflicted with it from spring to autumn, that the horror excited at the frequency of deaths, caused an immense number of citizens to take refuge in the country; and the greater part of the shops being shut, the churches and markets deserted, the city presented only the aspect of one silent and mournful solitude.

In the midst of all this misery, the most formidable enemy of the Florentines, the Duke of Milan, not content with occupying (as we have already seen) the most important cities, was fomenting and exciting dissensions within the walls of Florence. At his instigation, as was believed, a great number of the Florentine outlaws, who were in Lombardy, conspired to return to Florence. They were to penetrate on the side of the Arno, and raising a clamour call upon the people to take to arms, and change the state. Amongst the conspirators of Florence, who corresponded with the outlaws, was San Miniato de' Ricci, who in seeking new proselytes, discovered the conspiracy to Silvester Caviciulli, encouraging him to enter it, in order to revenge the death of Picchio his relation: but the latter either dreading the uncertainty of the event, or not liking innovations,
^{1400.} accused him before the government. San Miniato was arrested, and having revealed the order of the con-

spiracy under the pains of torture, was beheaded, and three days afterwards, Davizi, as he was coming from

Bologna, ignorant of the discovery that had been
 1401. made, was taken and executed. Anthony Alberti, being accused by a friar with being an accomplice in it, was sentenced to the payment of a sum of money, and was banished three hundred miles without the state; and as his family was always suspected, every individual of it, more than fifteen years old, was also sent to the confines*.

The wrath and dread of the Florentines at the Duke of Milan continued increasing, as offences were multiplied; and the war he waged with them was the more destructive as it was concealed, and not openly to be complained of: to add to their fears, Bologna had fallen under the control of the Bentivoglio; and as the mind of one person alone was more easy to be gained than that of a whole community, they had reason to fear that Bentivoglio would not be able to resist the artifices with which the crafty Milanese would attack him, and if he became master too of Bologna, Florence, whose power depended upon commerce, would be entirely ruined, as its course being cut off also on this side, she would no longer be enabled to direct it either by the route of Pisa or Talamone, which were fallen into the hands of her enemy. The greater part of Italy then would be at his discretion. The imbecility of the Emperor Vencislaus, and the schism of the church removed from him all opposition: the Venetians remained silent spectators, and were probably desirous of the ruin of the Florentines, their rivals in commerce, the more so as the rivalry which existed between them allowed them not,

* Sozom. Pist. Spec. His. loc. cit. Macch. Ist. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 16.

probably, to see the danger which would ensue to them upon the ruin of the former.

In the mean time the ignorant Emperor Vencislaus was deposed by Boniface IX, a step which was accelerated by the indignation shown by nations; he had sold the title of duke to the Count of Virtù, and Robert of Bavaria, an active prince, was newly elected. The Florentines, in this danger, sent ambassadors to him, together with all the allies (except the Venetians :) they hit him at a lucky moment, when they found him very angry with the Duke of Milan. This man, whose mind was averse to the perpetration of no crime, so long as it served his interest, knowing that the emperor entertained hostile sentiments towards him, endeavoured to poison him by offering 40,000 florins in gold to his physician to do so. He was discovered and arrested, and having confessed his crime, was condemned to be crushed on the wheel by the university of Nuremberg, to which the emperor intrusted the trial*.

The emperor now determined upon coming to Italy in order to effect the complete ruin of the Milanese duke; and the Florentines, whose riches had made them universal paymasters, promised to make him a present of 200,000 florins in gold, and 200,000 more by way of loan if he wanted them†. But the duke was not

* L'Ammir. History, lib. 16. Buonaccorso Pitti, who was at that time ambassador of the Florentines to Cæsar, relates the fact a little differently, and attributes to himself the merit of a warning given to the emperor to beware of the Duke of Milan, since when at supper with the emperor he had seen he took no precaution against such a danger; and shortly afterwards the treaty was discovered between Maestro Pietro da Sosignano, physician of the duke, and his physician once scholar of Peter, and that Cæsar said to Pitti that he owed to him his life.

† The immense wealth the Florentines possessed is evident in these

without the necessary provisions for the defence; by his artifices he had succeeded in getting over to him from the confederacy, the Lords of Mantua and Ferrara; he had taken into his pay 4,500 lancers, 12,000 infantry, picked troops, commanded by the best generals*, and had covered and secured the frontiers. The emperor approached with a numerous army of 15,000 cavalry, and a proportionate number of infantry. The Dukes of Saxony and Austria accompanied him, the Lord of Padua had sent him his troops, and the Florentines ordered the first rate of 110,000 florins to be immediately paid in Venice: but this great army was soon dispersed. A very lively skirmish took place, which was soon converted into a general battle near Brescia, between a large body of the Germans and another of the duke, in which the Germans were routed, put to a disgraceful flight, and the Duke of Austria was taken prisoner. It was generally believed that had the whole of the Milanese army come into battle, the emperor would have been completely defeated. Hence either that the Germans now found their difficulties greater than they imagined, or by the natural instability attendant upon mankind, the Archbishop of Cologne, and the Duke of Austria who was released three days afterwards, declared their intention to return to Germany. The emperor was soon after abandoned by the greater part of his barons, and came to Padua † with no more than 4,000 horse. The Florentines were highly discon-

large expenses, since these two sums, reduced to the value of our times, amount to not less than 3,000,000 of sequins.—Sozom. loc. cit. Amn. Ist. lib. 16.

* These were Vermi, Babiano, Tacino Cane, Pandolfo Malatesta, and others.

† Sozom. loc. cit. Pogg. Hist. lib. 3. Amn. lib. 16.

certed at this, and sent fresh ambassadors to Cæsar; mutual complaints ensued, the emperor having the audacity to complain that the remainder of the sum stipulated had not been paid to him. The Venetians acted as mediators, and persuaded the Florentines to pay it. Never had so much money been spent so uselessly*.

The Duke of Milan, in mockery of the imperial forces, sent a part of his army with Count Albengo to harass Bologna. The emperor did not long delay his departure from Italy, leaving the Florentines, together with their loss of money, in the dread of the powerful army of the duke, which was useless in Lombardy, being turned against them. This tempest was finally warded

1402. off by the discord which ensued between the captains, and consequently the troops of the duke. Ugolotto Bianciardi with his part of the army came in contact with Otto Buonterzo, and they fought as in a regular battle†. Bologna was nevertheless so much harassed that the Florentine merchandise could not pass through it, and the government was obliged to open treaties with Lucca and Rimini, in order to give it that course.

In the mean time the heat of the war was raging around Bologna, which was commanded by John Bentivoglio, and was attacked by the duke, and defended by the Florentines. Their captain, General Bernardone, was there with a large body of troops, joined by many Bolognese. In lieu of keeping themselves shut up to defend the city, which was very difficult to be taken, the confederates chose to make a sortie, and hazard a battle: the troops of the duke were more numerous, and led on

* Sozom. loc. cit. Pogg. lib. 3. Amm. 16. Pitti Cronica, who adds that the emperor was already gone by sea, and that upon the advice of the Doge he went after him, and brought him back to Venice.

† Sozom. loc. cit.

by experienced captains, amongst whom was the Count Alberic and Jacop Verme; the Bolognese and Florentine army experienced a great rout, the captain general was taken prisoner, together with two sons of the Lord of Padua, and many other brave officers. This defeat was followed by the fall of Bologna, which the Milanese troops entered by treachery. John Bentivoglio was slain after having bravely defended himself throughout the night, and killed many with his own hand; and this last bulwark of the Florentine republic fell into the hands of the duke*.

Whilst the Florentines, however, were now giving themselves up as entirely lost; whilst the duke, having every reason to expect that he would become master of the republic, which was already surrounded on every side by his forces, and which being once overcome, no obstacle of consequence would have remained, was ordering a golden diadem to be made for him, to be crowned therewith King of Italy; death, on the 3rd of September, broke all his vast designs, and at once liberated the Florentine republic from all dread, as she had been formerly freed therefrom in the death of Castruccio. A comet had appeared a short time before, and confirmed the superstitious credulity of those persons, who read in such an appearance the presage of the death of some sovereign. His dark, dissimulating, and cruel character was adapted to the times in which he lived, when nations ready for rebellion, undisciplined troops, mercenary and treacherous leaders excited general mistrust: these qualities, united with a profound knowledge of political affairs, rendered him very powerful, and fitted, had he lived, to overthrow

* Pogg. Hist. lib. 4. Mattei de Grifon. memoriale. Hist. Rer. Ital. tom. 18. Cron. di Bologna.

the Florentine republic which formed his greatest obstacle to the throne of Italy. Capable of every crime and cruelty, particularly when concealed, whenever he treated of acquiring states and power, he possessed not however the atrocious character of his father and uncle, who appeared to delight in the effusion of blood, and in the protracted torments endured by their wretched subjects. He was a lover of belles lettres, of the fine arts, and a protector of the learned, and supported his establishment in royal splendour*. To him we are indebted for the splendid edifice of the cathedral of Milan; the Gothic taste with which it was raised, whilst, at the same time, the Holy Mary of the Flower (Santa Maria del Fiore) was building in Florence with all possible elegance, prove how far the two cities were removed from each other in the progress made in the arts. He died † at the ^{1403.} age of fifty-five, of a contagious fever, in Marignano; a place of pleasure, where he had retired to in order to avoid the contagion of Padua. The joy evinced by the Florentines equalled the dread in which they had held him, by publicly reciting the little verse "*Il laccio è rotto, e noi siamo liberi. The snare is broken, and we are free.*"

The death of the duke was attended with those consequences which might be foreseen; his children were still young‡, the eldest of whom exceeded not fifteen

* Cor. Ist. Mil. p. 4.

† The court astrologers, according to custom, had determined the hour of departure for Marignano, and had foretold to the duke that he would return King of Italy; hardly was he arrived when he was taken ill, and shortly died; then the appearance of a comet, at that time, did honour to his death. Pogg. Hist. lib. 4. Il. Mur. Ann d' Ital., makes him die at that age, Verre at forty-nine years.

‡ He had two legitimate sons, and one natural. The elder, John

years; the states were divided between them, dissensions arose between the ministers, and a woman, the widow duchess, was at the head of the government. The people in Milan raised a cry against a minister called Barbarava, a principal actor in the old and new government; and although he was supported and protected by the duchess, he was obliged to yield to the expressions of public hatred, and fly from Milan. All the remainder of the state was in confusion; various cities rebelled, others were full of commotions and conspiracies, and the captains of the duke, under the pretext of guarding various towns, held a complete dominion over them. The sons were all unfortunate, two died of a violent death, a third of a natural one, but at a moment when he saw all his states torn away from him, and with them an end to the power and the reign of the Visconti.

The Florentines, a little before the death of the duke, had entered into a confederacy with the pope, and gave great annoyance to the cities of the Visconti, Perugia, Pisa, and particularly Bologna, of which they hoped to make an easy and speedy conquest; and the pope looking upon it as secure, had appointed the Cardinal Baldassar Coscia his legate to it, who, being a son of John of Procida, of a warlike disposition like the rest of his house, had been created general of his armies by the pope. The great disturbances which broke out in the

Maria, received by the will of his father, together with the title of Duke, Milan, Cremona, Como, Lodi, Placence, Parma, Reggio, Bergamo, Brescia, Sienna, Perugia and Bologna. Philip Maria, his second born, with the title of count, got Pavia, Novara, Vercelli, Tortona, Alessandria, Verona, Vicenza, Feltro, Belluno and Bassano, with the coast of Trento. Gabriel, the natural son, made legitimate, Pisa, others add Sarzana; but as the Florentines were in treaty to purchase it from the Duke of Milan, it appears to have belonged to him.

Milanese state, induced the duchess and her ministers to make an accommodation in any way with the pope: Charles Malatesta, the Lord of Mantua, and the Cardinal Coscia, were the mediators, and before the Florentines got any hint of it, all was concluded by the duchess agreeing to cede Bologna, and to withdraw the troops she had there to Perugia. The Florentines

^{1404.} were highly incensed when the news of the treaty reached them; but being made known in Bologna, the enraged citizens, without whose vote the city had been disposed of, took up arms, drove out the Visconti, and gave themselves voluntarily over to the pope. Perugia also came again under his dominion.

The Florentines, united with the Lords of Padua and Ferrara, prosecuted the war, and a body of troops, collected from these three confederates, repaired to Lombardy to support Cavalcabo, who had made Cremona rebel. Sienna too abandoned the Visconti, and made peace with the Florentines. Pisa had fallen to the lot of Gabriel Maria Visconti, natural son of the duke, who, coming there with his mother Agnes Montegazza, either governed this city harshly, or the Pisans evinced a desire for novelty, and were very discontented. The Florentines, therefore, again entertained hopes of occupying Pisa. A traitor pointed out to them a gate which was shut up in a slight part of the wall, and situated in a concealed place which they thought could be easily broken down, and their soldiers might penetrate through it by night: they endeavoured, therefore, to take Pisa by surprise. The troops were ordered to march secretly thither under the command of the Count Bertoldo Orsini, and the Florentine commissaries; but the traitor having repented revealed the treaty to the Pisans: the wall had been strengthened, and the place supplied

with troops, by whom the Florentines were repulsed. This attempt filled the Genoese with jealousy, since had the Florentines succeeded therein, they well knew* the increase of power the Florentine commerce would have derived from it by the acquisition of ports and maritime coast. This alone is sufficient to prove the decay of Pisa : that republic was no longer one of the three mistresses of the seas, of whom the Genoese had been so jealous, and who had often joined with the Florentines, in order to ruin her; the jealousy of the Genoese was now directed towards the power of the Florentines. The Genoese, therefore, held conferences with Gabriel, or rather with his tutors, laying before him the danger he was in of becoming a prey to the Florentines, and by means of Buccicaldo, Marshal of France, Lieutenant of the King in Genoa, they caused him to be placed under the protection of that monarch. Buccicaldo then intimated to the Florentines to desist from all hostility, who resisted indeed at the beginning, but it became necessary for them to make a truce with the Lord of Pisa, in order not to lose the rich merchandise that had been sequestrated in Genoa by Buccicaldo, who in the mean time occupied some fortresses which belonged to Pisa, and particularly Leghorn: an occupation which proved, under the veil of protecting Gabriel, what views he had upon that state.

Suddenly, however, both he and the Genoese changed their tone of language, and secretly offered Pisa for sale to the Florentines; the following are the causes given by historians for so sudden a change. The Venetians, in endeavouring to extend themselves on the continent, had occupied Verona, and threatened Padua: their

* Sozom. loc. cit.

power, too great already by sea, was still more dreaded by land by their ancient rivals the Genoese: the latter saw the necessity of giving succours to the Lord of Padua, and, in order to make their succour valid to interest the Florentines in it. They knew the means necessary to be employed to gain them, and therefore offered them the acquisition of Pisa. Peter of Luna, antipope, who wished to gain the obedience of the Florentines by some agreeable act, Buccicaldo, ruler of the Genoese, the Florentine Alderotti, who was in Genoa, and Gino Capponi, who was secretly summoned there by the latter, treated for the purchase*. They endeavoured to persuade Gabriel, by means of Buccicaldo, to sell the city to the Florentines, by laying before him the difficulty of keeping it. The treaty was not kept sufficiently secret to be concealed from the Pisans, who, having roused the ancient hatred they bore the Florentines, took to arms, and after a fierce contest, obliged Gabriel with his mother to take shelter on the fortress, which, having provided with a sufficient body of troops, the mother and the son withdrew to Sarzana. The treaty was then concluded by the Florentines, through the particular interference of Gino Capponi; Gabriel was to consign to them the citadel of Pisa and the fortresses of Librafatta, and the Holy Mary on the Mountain, (Santa Maria a Monte), they were to pay Gabriel 206,000 florins in gold; and if, within a short time they should become masters of Pisa, they were bound to succour the Lord of Padua. Although this is the cause mentioned by all historians, it appears too frivolous to induce the Genoese to consent to the sale, since it was now easy to see how very late the

* Gino Capponi Comm. Pogg. Hist. lib. 4. Matt. Palmieri de Capt. Pis.

Florentines could send any succours to the Lord of Padua, being first obliged to conquer Pisa, which was ready to defend herself to the last drop of blood: the

Genoese also could not have been very anxious for the acquisitions made by the Venetians on Terra Firma. ^{1405.} Probably the whole was an intrigue of Buccicaldo, who governed that republic as lord. He designed to gain the great sum for the sale, of which he would defraud the unhappy Gabriel, of whom, as we see in the course of events, he could get rid as he wished, covering himself from all accusations which could be made against him by the Genoese public with the pretext of lending aid to the Lord of Padua*.

The latter had been straightened by the Venetians, and was, therefore, disposed to compound with them by giving up the city of Padua for a sum of money, but this ray of hope made him break the treaty, and caused the ruin of all his house; the succours never arrived, and the Venetians partly by force, and partly by stratagem,

* The unfortunate Gabriel never received this sum. After wandering in Lombardy, and returning to Genoa, he insisted with the mediator Buccicaldo upon the payment of his credit. The latter arrested him, accusing him of having gone to Genoa to betray him to Facino Cane; he was placed under torture, and the credulous and innocent youth was persuaded to confess, being flattered that it was only a process of formality, and that he should be liberated. (Ser Cambi, Ist. tom. 18. Rer. Ital.) He confessed a crime of which he was not guilty, his head was cut off at the age of twenty-two, his estates confiscated, and the cruel impudence of Buccicaldo went so far as to make pretensions to the sum promised to Gabriel by the Florentines. His unhappy mother died of a fall whilst she was passing upon a plank from one wall to another in the fortress of Pisa, a fall probably occasioned her by the soldiers, in order to get rid of her (Gino, Capp. Comm.) These events paint the manners of the times, and show the eulogists of past times how well they employ their praises.

occupied the city and citadel, while the unfortunate Francis, advised to have recourse to the generosity of the conquerors, repaired with a son to Venice, and throwing himself at the feet of the doge, Michael Zeno, implored his pardon. They were shut up in prison, where another son was already confined, and, a short time afterwards, were all three strangled: so much can cold and inexorable state policy, (to use a phrase invented to cover cruelty) effect over every sentiment of humanity and of justice! Of the two other sons who had taken refuge at Florence, and were supported by this republic, one died a natural death; the other, being discovered in the Paduan territory, was beheaded.

In the meantime the Florentines, having sent troops upon the Pisan territory, got possession of the citadels of Pisa, Lifrabratta, and the Holy Mary on the Mountain, (S. Maria a Monte), and considered it would be no difficult matter to become masters of the city: but while they were taking the necessary measures for the enterprise, news arrived at Florence, which struck the citizens as it were with a thunderbolt, viz., that the citadel had been lost by negligence and cowardice. A tower, called S. Agnes, joined the citadel with the walls of the city; the Pisans attempted to destroy this tower, by aiming, from time to time, blows of mortar against it. Having perceived that whenever these blows took effect, the people within it retired upon the wall of the citadel, they continued to fire: in the meantime, a number of men quietly mounted in the empty tower, and as many behind them, who, suddenly shewing themselves to the defenders, the latter became panic-struck and confused, and thinking themselves betrayed, suffered themselves tamely to be made prisoners, and the citadel was taken. This loss, together with a proud and almost contemptuous embassy

sent by the Pisans, irritated the Florentines still more, and animated them to the enterprise*. The ten who were to conduct the war were already created. After Bertoldo Orsini, who was wounded, and held in little repute by the Florentines, Obizo of Montegarullo was chosen as captain, and Cosmo Grimaldi was intrusted at sea with four galleys, two galleots, and other vessels, to block up the Pisan port, and the mouth of the Arno†. This little fleet succeeded in shutting up the port of a republic, which had often sent out more than two hundred armed ships: the passages too were occupied, by which succour could be sent the Pisans, who prepared themselves for the most obstinate defence. Having collected what provisions they could in so short a space of time, they united the divided minds of the citizens: the Bergolini, Raspanti, and all the families which had been inimical to each other, made the most sacred promises to maintain a reciprocal harmony and friendship. The Gambacorti, friends of the Florentines, wished to be the mediators of an accommodation which was endeavoured to be brought about; for this end the government of Florence was entreated to give a safe pass for two months to the Pisan ambassadors, but the Florentines replied with the tone of sovereigns of Pisa, as they would have done to a subject city, that they should first let them know the object of their embassy,

* They demanded the fortresses of Santa Maria a Monte and Librafratta, saying that what they had expended should be restored,

† These having given the chase to a Pisan vessel laden with grain, the latter had retired under the tower of Vada, defended by the mortars of the tower. A Florentine citizen, Peter Marengi, was bold enough to throw himself into the river, and swimming with a lighted torch of firework in one hand set fire to the ship amidst the fire of the mortars, and returned only slightly wounded.—Capp. Comm.

and they would give them an answer if it was agreeable to them, adding on the address: "*To the magistrates or elders of our city of Pisa (Agli anziani della nostra città di Pisa)*", whereby all hope of treaty was at an end.

The Florentines were in part consoled for the loss of the citadel of Pisa, by the capture of the fortress of Verrucola, which was lost by the Pisans by similar negligence: they turned their attention in the meantime to the occupation of the castles of the Pisan territory, and straightened Pisa by blockade; and as it was of importance that they should receive no supply of provisions by the Arno, they posted a body of troops at San Piero in Grado, and built two wooden castles upon the banks of the Arno, armed with mortars to watch over and prevent any succours arriving to the enemy from this side. Two of the ten of war; Maso Albizzi and Gino Capponi, were the commissaries of the army in their enterprise against Pisa, but Capponi it was who acted with the greatest vigour, and distinguished himself above all the rest. No care was neglected to remove every hope of foreign succour. The King Ladislao, upon the entreaty of the Florentines, promised not to meddle with their affairs, so that they would not interfere in those of Rome. Ottoburno Terzo, who was at Parma, without pay, was also gained over by money. In these critical circumstances, the Pisans thought affairs would proceed better if they were administered by one alone, and John Gambacorti was chosen for their signior. Provisions began to grow scarce; many ships which were bringing supplies had been taken, others were dispersed by storms, and as the course of the Arno was shut up, the remainder could not pass up it. The Florentines succeeded in cutting off the road to the supplies, which they

knew had been called for by the Pisans. Agnolo Pergola, a brave leader, who assembled troops to convoy them, was defeated, and his troops dispersed, and while the Florentines were straightening Pisa on all sides, their arms scoured the castles of the Pisan territory, and took possession of the greater part of them: they also placed the feudal lord, who depended upon that government, under their protection or in dependance upon them.

In these enterprises, a singular man particularly distinguished himself, who, from the lowest origin, arrived at the greatest honours, and founded one of the most respectable families in Italy: this is Muzio Attendoli of Cotignola, known under the denomination of Sforza, a surname given him by the Count Alberic, and adopted by the public from the audacity shewn by this youth in obliging others to yield to him whatever he chose. It is related of him that when he was very young, and digging the ground*, soldiers passed by, and invited him to the profession of arms; that he threw the spade upon a tree in order to draw an augury from it, determined to abandon the occupation of a countryman if the spade remained, and to follow it if it fell down: the spade remained aloft, and he became a celebrated warrior. His son Francis, who was born in San Miniato of Luccia Treziana, became still more illustrious than his father, and Duke of Milan. Sforza was in the service of the Florentines; had distinguished himself in various actions both before

* Although some flattering genealogist has afterwards asserted that the family Attendoli was noble, Muzio is mentioned in these times by the Romans as a countryman in Cotignola. Peter Candido, writer of the Life of Duke Francis, and his contemporary, passes quietly over the origin of the father, and calls the mother Lucia and Torsano illustrious.—Murat. Rer. Ital. tom. 20.—See too Leodristi Cribelli Vita Sforza, tom. 19.

and during this war, and was sent with a considerable force against Gaspero Pucci, who was bringing aid to the Pisans by the sea-coast; he had already defeated him, making prisoners of the greater part of those
1406. people. He was now with the army at San Piero in Grado. The two bastions or castles were not yet finished, but the bridge of wood which united them was so. The Pisans, profiting of a swell of the Arno, sent with the tide of the river large beams, which, by striking against the bridge, broke it. One of the bastions was separated from the army, and without people to defend it: it was proposed by the Florentine generals to fire at and level it, in order that the enemy might not fortify himself there, as he might easily occupy it: Sforza opposed this and took upon himself to defend it, and passing the Arno rapidly in a boat with two men, he was followed by Tartaglia, who was also a celebrated leader and rival of Sforza, and by degrees, others would have passed, but the Pisans being informed of what had happened, hastened towards the bastion. These two captains now attempted an action, which might have cost them dear, but which shews what courage and presence of mind are able to effect in war: they mounted on horseback, and boldly marched against the enemy, in an imposing attitude. The Pisans could not believe these two captains were alone, but dreaded some snare was laid for them; nay, as the Florentine army moved towards Pisa at the same time with loud shouts, they thought the whole a concerted affair, and gave themselves up to flight. Sforza, however, who pushed on too far in following them, had his horse slain under him and found himself in great danger. The people, seeing the risk that was run, finished the bastion with all possible expedition, provided it well with armed men, and a chain of iron

was drawn from one bastion to the other; but the impatient Florentines, thinking the siege converted into a mere blockade, and going on but slowly, having recalled Albizzi and Capponi, sent two other commissaries to the army, James Gianfigliuzzi and Vieri Guadagni, who, in order to achieve something new, by which they might gain reputation, were anxious to try an assault. Great promises of gain were held out to the soldiers, if success attended them; such as double pay, 100,000 florins of bounty, and the pillage of the city. They proceeded quietly by night to scale the walls between the gate of Stampace and that of St. Mark; when the troops and the people hastening there, a warm affray ensued, in which the Florentines were driven back with great loss. This assault proved the animosity with which the war was carried on; a brave soldier, called Papi of Calcinaja, who had frequently distinguished himself in the Florentine army, having mounted upon the walls, and closing with a Pisan, both fell into the city, and died in the fall. The Pisans, unable to do more, caused the body of Papi, attached to the tail of an ass to be dragged through the city; an useless cruelty, which only gave rise to others, as the Pisans, who were made prisoners, were hung up in revenge, by the Florentines.

It appearing so difficult to gain Pisa by assault, the blockade was the more rigidly observed. A dangerous contention had broken out between the two leaders, Sforza, and Tartaglia, who, dividing as it were, all the Florentine army among themselves, threatened an effusion of blood, and it was to be dreaded that the Pisans would profit from it, by gaining one of them with gold. Capponi was recalled to the army, and, in one day, appeased them; but wishing to divide them, he persuaded Sforza to repair to the other side of the Arno, as was

really necessary in order to straighten the city the more. Besides the two trenches, situated in the Arno below Pisa, the river was therefore shut up above it; two corps were situated, one under Sforza, at Cotignola, the other on the other side of the Arno, which by means of a bridge of boats, communicated with each other, and could afford reciprocal assistance. The general of the Florentines was changed. Obizzo, of Montegarullo, having requested to retire, in order to defend his estates, Lucas Fiesco was substituted in his place. Provisions in Pisa were becoming daily more scarce, and Gambacorti thought of banishing the useless mouths, the women and the old people from the city; but the Florentine commissaries issued an order, that whatever man came from the gates of Pisa should be hanged; and the women, with their clothes shortened below their waist, were to be marked in the cheek. They had even the cruelty to cause this atrocious sentence to be carried into execution in sight of Pisa, in order to deter others. In vain an herald of the Duke of Burgundy, to whom the Pisans had offered the command, arrived at the camp of the Florentines, entreating the leaders to abandon the siege. He was not only treated with contempt, but met with a violence unworthy of civilized nations, as the rights of people were violated by condemning him to be thrown into the Arno, with his hands bound behind him: in the night, however, either that they attempted not to carry the sentence into execution, or he received assistance, he was enabled to escape, and came to complain of the barbarous treatment he had received to the government of Florence, from whom he received no answer. The duke, in revenge, unable to do more, in vain endeavoured, by means of the King of France, upon whom Genoa depended, to oblige a numerous body of Genoese, who

served under Fiesco to abandon the Florentines. The blow had been foreseen and prevented, as those soldiers were first made to take the most solemn oath not to abandon the Florentine standards on any account, an oath which they kept because it was profitable to them, and which served as a decent answer to the intimation made by the King of France.

Famine was now advancing in Pisa every day, and every hope of obtaining provisions being vain, the citizens who directed the government foresaw the necessity of a capitulation. Gambacorti secretly began the treaty with Gino Capponi*. The most advantageous conditions were for the Gambacorti, to whom the dominion of many places and castles of the Pisan territory was reserved, together with the islands of Giglio and Capraia, and a sum of 50,000 florins in gold was to be paid him; the Bishop Gambacorti got the promise of the bishopric of Florence; Pisa was to be subject to Florence; John was to give up the entrance into the city to the Florentines, and all the fortresses he held in hand: this treaty was concluded secretly, in order to avoid any tumults in the city. Capponi went to Florence to get the conditions ratified, and they were unanimously accepted†. Hostages were given on both

* About midnight one Bindo delle Brache was sent by Gambacorti from Pisa, and coming to the tent of Gino Capponi and Bartolomeo Corbinelli, they kept him to supper, and from the voracity with which he and his companion ate, they well understood what a famine raged in Pisa: they let them satisfy themselves, but would not permit a morsel of bread to be taken to Pisa.

† Poggio says that they appeared grievous, but Capponi asserts that, in the first condition, of forty-seven votes there was only one contrary; and a second was made, in order to enable them to say that none had dissented, as happened.

sides ; among the Florentines were Neri, son of Gino Capponi, and Cosmo Medicis, the same whose authority and riches afterwards so greatly increased and who was called father of his country. Gino Capponi, one of the ten of the war, who had been chiefly instrumental in the acquisition of Pisa, took possession thereof. It became necessary to take care that the entry into Pisa should be made with perfect security to the troops, and at the same time to prevent military licentiousness from finding any pretence for pillage, what was greatly to be dreaded from mercenary troops. The vigilance, the rigour, and determination observed by Capponi, the order he issued that every one who dared to rob should be immediately hanged, the resolute reply he gave to Francis Mirandola, who appeared to seek a pretext for a sacking of the place, became the salvation of Pisa. At the dawn of the day of 9th October, the Florentine troops made their entry, and were received at the gate by John Gambacorti, who held a kind of short and sharp dart in his hand, and put it in the hands of Capponi, telling him he gave it him in token of his command over the city. The troops marched, observing all decorum and discipline*. Capponi, upon his arrival at the hall of the priors, held a discourse upon the event which was more simple than eloquent, by exhorting the Pisans to obedience, and fidelity towards the Florentines ; shewing them that from the regularity with which the troops had conducted themselves†, they had every thing to

* Capponi had ordered the gibbets to be raised, threatening not only the soldiers if they disobeyed, but making even the captains responsible for every disorder which ensued.

† Capponi says of his soldiers : “ and they behaved themselves no

hope from the Florentine moderation. He was answered by Messer Bartolomew of Piombino, in a speech filled with passages taken from scripture, more becoming a missionary than a statesman. Amidst the pompous and far-fetched phrases he made use of, he discovered only the greatest abasement of mind, with not a ray of that dignity which may be preserved even in the midst of misfortunes*.

This war had lasted from the beginning of March to the 9th October. Although the fall under the dominion of the Florentines would have appeared very severe to the Pisans, they were so much afflicted by famine that they felt the burthen very little: the citizens appeared so many skeletons; neither grain nor meal was to be found; for some days the people had fed only upon grass they plucked in the streets: waggons of provisions were therefore now sent to them, and bread was distributed in abundance. As all the advantage of this treaty accrued to the Gambacorti who had been always friends of the Florentines, and as it was managed with the greatest secrecy, they have been accused by some writers of being traitors. The impartial historian, however, will accuse them of nothing more than that seeing the loss of Pisa inevitable, they drew from it the greatest possible advantages to them-

otherwise than if in their own city of Florence they had to set the example, that, if as many observant friars had entered, more scandal would have followed."

* Of all the events of the siege and capitulation of Pisa, there is not a more authentic document than the commentaries of Gino Capponi, who was at once author of, and actor in these scenes. The narrative of Matthew Palmieri (de Captiv. Pisan.) is almost a copy of those commentaries written in Latin with more elegance; see too Sozom. loc. cit. Buonin, &c.

selves, avoiding at once greater calamities, and perhaps the sacking of their native country*. The news of this acquisition created exceeding joy in Florence, and it was celebrated both by sacred and profane pomp†.

^{1407.} The Florentine republic, whose power was founded upon commerce, could not have made a greater acquisition than the city of Pisa. The import and export of her merchandise, hitherto precarious because dependant upon the will of the Siennese or Pisans, now enjoyed every freedom; and, in fact, the Florentine commerce, from this epoch, received the greatest increase, and the riches of the Florentines have never been so great as in the fifteenth century. The republic, however, never became a maritime power; although, from this time she turned her thoughts towards her naval

* See Flamm. dal Borgo Diss. sulla Stor. Pis. Ann. Sane. Rer. Ital. Script. tom. 19. but particularly the chronologist of Lucca, Sen Cambi, who accuses John Gambacorti of treason. His narrations, however, are deprived of all probability: we have seen the progress of this war, and that Pisa could not maintain herself from want of provisions. To assert, as the Lucchese chronologist does, that John had caused all the wheat to be concealed is a thing very difficult to be believed, since, in cities where there were so many enemies, and so many eyes, a quantity of grain, not inconsiderable, cannot be so easily hidden. John had been made Lord of Pisa, and had depressed his enemies, and if the defence had a good issue, he would have derived greater glory and power from it than from the treachery. Finally, the most respectable historians of that age, such as Sozom. (loc. cit.), and Buoinincontri, (Annal. Rer. Ital. tom. 21.), who was no friend of the Florentines, nor of John Gambacorti, who, I say, had harshly extorted much money from his grandfather, accuse him not of treachery: I leave it therefore for the reader to judge, whether, upon equivocal facts, and doubtful reports, which the enmity of parties so easily diffuses, that accusation can be made against him.

† Histories of Florence, Anon. Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 9.